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THE COUNTESS OF MAR AND KELLIE.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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SOME FORGOTTEN
DAINTIES.

THE list of British birds which were formerly esteemed as delicacies by our forefathers is, when one begins to look into the matter, by no means an inconsiderable one. Some of these birds, such as ruffs and reeves, have fallen out of fashion from the melancholy fact that they are nowadays no longer obtainable. The drainage of the fens and the advances of cultivation have practically banished them from these islands. In other cases the disappearance of certain birds from modern cookery books and the tables of gourmets and the well-to-do is not so easily explainable. Wheatears, for example, had somehow lost their high place in the estimation of *bons vivants* for some time before the introduction of the Wild Birds' Protection Acts of the last twenty-two years. Yet wheatears were, and still are, undoubtedly a great delicacy, well comparable, as they used to be, to the ortolan of the Continent. The numbers of these birds to be seen about the South Downs is still very considerable; in old days, however, they must have been far more numerous. The quantity taken rather more than a century ago about Eastbourne was "prodigious," says Montagu. Pennant, the naturalist, estimated the annual catch in this district alone at 1,840 dozen. They were caught chiefly by the South Down shepherds, by placing two turves on edge, at each end of which a small horsehair noose, fixed to a stick, was set. Wheatears are inquisitive, active minded birds, and either by their habits of enquiry, or in search of food, or to obtain a shelter from rain-storms, they frequently entered these simple traps and were noosed. Fifty or sixty of these traps are reported to have each contained a bird when the shepherd made his morning round; and as the man could obtain a shilling a dozen for his captures, his wheatear sales brought him by no means a bad harvest. The harvest was, however, a short one, and took place chiefly in the two or three weeks of September when these birds were collecting south for their autumn migration. Wheatears, it is to be noted, never flock as do swallows, starlings, and other birds, and were, even in the good days, seldom to be seen together in numbers exceeding three or four at a time. In those days it was the custom for anyone desirous of obtaining a dozen or so of these birds to visit the shepherds' traps, take out the imprisoned wheatear, and leave a penny in its place.

For some reason or other, probably from some change in their migratory habits, wheatears are not now to be seen on the South Downs in the astonishing plenty of those days. They are always to be observed, however, in fair numbers during spring, summer, and early autumn, and have by no means deserted their ancient haunts. Even in modern Eastbourne they are to be seen frequently about the western parade, running to the foot of Beachy Head. Only last spring the writer found a nest of young wheatears in a crevice of the chalk cliff below the great Sussex headland, and these birds constantly nest in this locality. Needless to say, the fledgelings were left in peace, and the anxious parents, who had been watching our movements, returned to them rejoicing.

Wheatears, which are found in many parts of the world, from Scandinavia to East Africa, and from Persia and the Himalayas to Northern Asia, usually arrive in this country about the second week in March, and leave again in September. Some few, like the landrail, stonechat, and other migratory birds, remain behind and pass the winter with us. The art of snaring wheatears, practised for so many generations by Sussex hinds, has now fallen into almost complete disuse, and except perhaps here and there among the very oldest shepherds, we doubt if it is even remembered. From Eastbourne to Seaford we know of no Down shepherd who nowadays thinks about snaring one of these birds. That a September wheatear, fat and in good condition, is, although a small, yet a very delicious bird, cannot be doubted, yet we prefer the sight of these cheerful migrants, with their quick, flirting ways, their tolerance of mankind, and their pleasant little song, to the same creatures baked, like so many blackbirds, in a capacious pie.

Ruffs and reeves have, like the wheatear, vanished from the kitchen of British cooks and the tables of the rich. Unlike those birds, however, they are at the present day very seldom found in these islands, except occasionally as mere passing visitants on their spring and autumn migrations. The ruff, of course, gets its name from the extraordinary neck feathering which it puts forth in the breeding season, and as, except very occasionally in Norfolk, these birds at the present day scarcely ever breed in England, a ruff in its fighting and courting plumage is a sight not now to be witnessed in these islands. Yet, rather more than a hundred years ago, the pugnacious ruffs battled fiercely upon their "hills" among the dreary fens of Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, and Huntingdonshire, while the reeves looked on complacently at the desperate tournaments thus fought in their honour. Colonel Montagu, the well-known naturalist, found, after infinite trouble—for the fen fowlers were a very jealous and secretive folk—that these birds were still captured and fattened in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The birds were netted by the aid of decoys, and thereafter fattened for about a fortnight, being fed on boiled wheat and bread and milk, mixed with hempseed and occasionally sugar. The fen families who fattened these birds maintained themselves as a very close corporation, and never, if they could possibly help it, revealed the names or whereabouts of the fowlers from whom they obtained their birds. Their reasons were sound enough. They paid the poor fen fowlers ten shillings a dozen for their captures, while they themselves usually obtained two guineas a dozen for the same birds, after the brief period of fattening, and never less than thirty shillings.

The bar-tailed godwit, known locally as the yarwhelp, sea-woodcock, and half-curlew, is another of the great family of wading birds which was formerly in much estimation as a table luxury. It was taken in nets by means of stuffed decoys, much as were ruffs and reeves, and commanded a high price. The "Field Book," published in the early thirties of last century, describes it as "a bird of peculiar delicacy." Although fairly common during the spring and autumn migrations, this godwit is now but little known except to marsh and shore gunners, and its undoubted merits as a table bird seem to have passed into oblivion.

Yet another wader, the dainty knot, a much smaller bird than the godwit, which weighs as much as twelve ounces, has become as a table bird almost completely forgotten. Yet the knot was, until a century or so ago, captured in much the same manner in the fen country, fattened in the same way for sale, and as much esteemed by many as its bigger cousin, the ruff. Knots are still frequently seen round our coasts, in some seasons in large numbers. Sir Ralph Payne-Gallwey, one of the greatest and keenest of modern wildfowlers, bagged, not many years since, as many as 160 of these birds at a single discharge of his punt-gun.

Our Portrait Illustrations

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of the Countess of Mar and Kellie, wife of the twelfth Earl of Mar, also the fourteenth Earl of Kellie, who is premier Viscount of Scotland. Lady Mar and Kellie is a daughter of the eighth Earl of Shaftesbury. Elsewhere will be found a picture of Mrs. Rupert Beckett and her little daughter.



THE Royal visit to the West Country was, from beginning to end, a complete and glorious success. Dartmouth is always, as a local contemporary observed quite justly, near akin to Paradise, and on the day when the King and Queen came to lay the corner stone of the new Naval College the sunlit estuary of the Dart looked simply beautiful. It was as hot as it often is at Midsummer, too, and that made all the difference. Then the "three towns," where the end of the week was passed, had decorated themselves very bravely in honour of him whom they saluted with the words "Lands which Cæsar never saw own thy sway," and the main spectacle, the launch of the mighty battleship Queen, was stately and majestic in the highest degree.

Very distressing, since it leaves something more than a suspicion that there was some needless running away as well as a good deal of real bravery, is the news of Lord Methuen's reverse, which must, we fear, defer the end of the war somewhat, although it cannot affect the nature of the end. But there is one bright side to the affair. It gave to Lord Roberts an opportunity, which he seized with his customary chivalry, of making a very generous speech in defence of Lord Methuen. Some of us at home have been precipitate in criticism of Lord Methuen, particularly in relation to Magersfontein; and, when such persons have met returned officers who were in that battle, they have been apt to feel a little ashamed of themselves. It is something, therefore, to know, even thus late in the day, that in the opinion of Lord Roberts, formed after examining the field of battle, Lord Methuen did not do amiss on that occasion. Let us unite in wishing a speedy recovery to a gallant soldier.

The mishap was the one topic of conversation in street and club and private house. That adverse criticism was to be heard no one can truthfully deny, and yet at a calmer moment there will be a general disposition to sympathise with the generous tone adopted in the House of Peers by Lords Roberts, Salisbury, and Spencer. You cannot make omelettes without breaking eggs. All the same, Delarey has scored lately with disconcerting rapidity. It was he who, on February 26th, overwhelmed Von Donop's column, killing fifty men and capturing 600, and now he has added to his credit the most conspicuous success achieved by the Boers during the war. He has eclipsed De Wet, whom, according to Lord Kitchener's theory, this effort was meant to succour. What lends more gravity to the incident is that so many people in South Africa are only waiting to see which way the cat jumps. Every incident of this kind means more recruits and more secret supplies to the Boers, and it would be extremely childish for us to ignore or try to conceal that fact.

Even in this good-natured country it will not readily be forgotten that when Mr. Brodrick made the announcement in the House of Commons the Irish Members received it with applause. They cheered the news of the capture, and they cheered the news that Methuen was wounded and a prisoner. To comment on their lack of courtesy and generosity would be a waste of time; they do not possess a rudimentary idea of these virtues. But they may be reminded that in no other country of Europe would they be allowed the same freedom to proclaim themselves openly as the enemies of England. It may be necessary at no very distant time to administer a reminder that British patience is not inexhaustible, and that the fact of their being Members of Parliament does not exonerate them from observing the ordinary decencies of life. A very great deal of indignation was expressed in the lobbies of the House after the incident, but it was nothing to what is felt over the length and breadth of the country. In America it is apparent to all thoughtful citizens that "the low Irish" are productive of nothing but evil to the policy of the Republic, and they are bringing the moral home to us also.

President Roosevelt, it has been announced, has decided not to send his daughter to England for the Coronation festivities, the reason given being that it would not be quite becoming for so young a girl to figure prominently in ceremonies taking place so far away from home. In England there is enough old-fashioned family sentiment left to win respect for this view. It has an old-time ring about it that is fresh and wholesome, at a time when girls, and especially American girls, pride themselves on gadding about alone. The people of the United States, however, do not appear to be altogether satisfied that this is a complete statement of the President's views on the matter. Some of them are hinting in no ambiguous terms that the refusal is prompted not so much by a desire to respect the finest domestic traditions, but out of deference to that Irish contingent which exercises more influence than it deserves to over American politics. We would be sorry to have to accept that view. President Roosevelt has won golden opinions from all sorts of men, and is undoubtedly a many-sided, accomplished statesman, but the quality in a President most likely to be required in the days to come is backbone, and if he has not that the rest is all in vain.

The Americans have something more than a Transvaal in the Philippines, and those who have just returned are of opinion that "a sort of a war" is likely to go on there for years unless sterner measures are adopted. No sooner does a party advance under what seem to be peaceful conditions than the banditti come down and massacre them, retreating to the hills again as soon as the soldiers appear. Partly this is due to over-humanity on the part of the Americans. When they have managed to capture leaders from the opposite camp they have sinned on the side of mercy, not imprisoning, deporting, or shooting them, any of which courses would be justifiable in the case of men who have had recourse to pillage and murder, but awarding them such posts as herdmen or postmasters. In politics there is no gratitude, and these men become simply spies over conquerors who have been too kind. There are times when sternness is the greatest and most lasting kindness. Such barbarities as have recently been reported really owe their origin to a misplaced leniency that is completely misunderstood.

Mr. Hanbury has been entertaining the Yorkshire Chamber of Agriculture with the enunciation of some vigorous views which, it is to be hoped, will be followed by corresponding action. The department over which he presides does not do a very great deal for the farmer, except provide him with interminable rows of figures that he never looks at. And even these, though most ably presented, are not quite "on the spot." For example, it is admittedly most desirable that the value and number of our poultry should be ascertained. Such bodies as the National Poultry Organisation Society are compelled to work in the dark and go by guesswork, simply because Mr. Hanbury's clerks do not do for England what is done for Ireland or France. Again, the Governments of Russia, Denmark, Canada, to select three widely different communities, take more practical measures to encourage the different branches of husbandry and open up markets than does that of Great Britain. In the Speech from the Throne at the opening of Parliament agriculture was not as much as mentioned, though there are several Acts relating to it that are known to be failures and ought to be replaced by others more operative. Mr. Hanbury has a great opportunity if he can take advantage of it.

The fate of M. Andrée, so long doubtful, seems to have been solved at last. A despatch from Winnipeg tells of the return of the search party who, two years ago, went out to look for Andrée or to discover traces of him or his expedition. To all appearances the unfortunate explorer, with his companions, was shot in cold blood by the Esquimaux. Several of them stated to the search party that they had seen a large ship flying in the air. When it came down three white men had alighted from it. These the Esquimaux had shot immediately, probably from fear of some supernatural agency in the propelling of a ship through the air. After killing the three men they had taken possession of their property, and the search party discovered tobacco, knives, etc., belonging to the ill-fated explorers, thus confirming the tale of their murder.

Prince Henry's visit to the United States has had both an amusing and an instructive side. The former was provided by the susceptibilities of the citizens of these States. Republicans vied with one another in providing lavish and costly entertainments for the representative of an absolute monarch, and ladies contended for his favour. Yet, on the other hand, a slight, probably an imaginary, neglect of a dead President called forth references to "this stripling of Royalty," and other expressions couched in true democratic style. But the grave aspect of the affair was the fact that it brought into touch two nations so different in character, yet so deeply intent on the same aim, the victory of commerce, as Germany and America. Prince Henry among his own people has the reputation of being "a nice boy,"

and enjoys much popularity in consequence. But he has also inherited a good share of his father's versatile intelligence, and seems to have made full use of his opportunity to learn by what means the go-ahead Yankees are forging their way along the line of material prosperity. Too material, some critics say. America is a great country to make money in, but lacks the taste and culture to attract those who wish to spend it, and hence the reason for many of her richest citizens seeking to make their homes abroad.

YOUNG SPRING.

O spring is fair to childhood's eyes
That gaze unfearing at the sun,
But dearer far to poet eyes—
O spring is fair.

When o'er the morning meadows one
Goes singing as the last star dies,
Her tears will fall e'er day is done.
So when the brief faint beauty lies
On the sweet flowers from winter won,
Unheeding child or poet cries,
O spring is fair.

M.

Dr. Welldon has been interviewed as to the extent to which public schools ought to concern themselves with commercial education, and is, on the whole, somewhat opposed to it. His contention is that those who are to be leaders should not specialise too soon or too much, but be given a first-rate mental training that will fit them for anything. In a word, he favours "the general purpose" education. This may in a sense be true, and the revival or success of commerce must in the end depend far more on the captains than on the foot soldiers of industry. No man of enterprise ever yet possessed a good idea and failed to realise it from lack of workmen to carry it out. Let the manufacturer have something to sell and intelligence enough to know where his market is, and he will not find it difficult to man and equip his workshop. Very often in our too great anxiety to give the labouring classes a technical education this principle is lost sight of, but all the same it commends itself to common-sense. At the same time, there is much to be said for Dr. Welldon's shrewd remark that the person most in need of a good commercial education is the commercial traveller.

The *Pall Mall Gazette*, of all papers in the world, is standing up for the forestry now being shown at Burnham Beeches. But the writer selected for the purpose does not appear to us very specially equipped for the task. His idea of smartness is to speak of landscape and woodland painters as "picturesque gentry who pass the winter months there sleeping in black wooden cubicles and working in mud-coloured tweed." Excellent good phrases indeed! But we did not know before either that artists slept "in black wooden cubicles" or that the value of a man's opinion depended on his bed and the colour of his clothes. In point of fact, of course, the boxes, or, as they are politely termed, "tarboard tabernacles," are used only for painting in. Old beeches, in this singular jargon, become the "eponymous divinities of the plain," and it is asserted that the cutting has been done to give them air and sunlight, just as if never a birch had been sacrificed to a holly. We are told that "the three ponds have been cleared of surplus rushes, the channels deepened, and the valley between opened up with advantage." Rushes (to some eyes) are most unsightly, a brook is changed into a drain, and the last phrase is what the woodman calls making "vistas." It grieves this defender of the faithful mightily that Burnham Beeches should be "a sportive wood run wild." Why not turn it into a cabbage-garden at once?

Nothing but satisfaction can be felt at the fact of the *Independance Belge* devoting no less than three columns to a review of Dr. Conan Doyle's book on the war. It does not come to a conclusion very flattering to England, but that is no matter. What is really of account is that a Continental newspaper makes a fair attempt to understand what we have to say in defence of the war. The misunderstanding, so far as it is genuine, and that is far from being always the case, comes from the fact that it is founded on deliberately falsified information. It is no more than the truth to say that Dr. Leyds has kept going during the whole time what is neither more nor less than a manufactory of lies. And Continental journals are not calculated to correct misrepresentation. Our own journals are so well represented abroad that it would be practically impossible to deceive the British nation for long about any question of foreign policy. But our neighbours are not so well served, and hence the petitions of humanitarian but deluded ladies and other proofs of dense ignorance of the proceedings in South Africa. Let them only begin to argue about Dr. Conan Doyle's book, and it is as certain as anything can be that in the end truth will prevail.

Quite apart from questions of government, there is something in the actual construction of the House of Commons that makes the present (possibly temporary) abnormal state of parties singularly inconvenient. Our House is not of the shape to accommodate a third party in the pleasant way that the shape of the French House adapts itself to any number of parties. To be sure there are not wanting those who will tell us that there are but two parties in our present House—the party in power, and the single, indissoluble Opposition. Nevertheless, we see what we see.

Doubtless there always is some un-Christian comfort to be drawn, as Rochefoucauld has told us, from the misfortunes of our friends; and while we in England are suffering under all the ills of influenza, small-pox, and the rest, which we regard in some degree as incidental to our singular winter climate, it is not without a certain sense of consolation that we hear that our countrymen who have left home surroundings in search of a milder spring in the Riviera and the like Southern resorts are not escaping a bit better than we are. It is true that the small-pox is less rife in the South of France, but after all we avoid that at home by the simple process of vaccination, and it is not the better classes of which it takes its horrid toll. The influenza is as bad in the Southern so-called health resorts as even in London, the foggy and smoke begrimed. The healthfulness of London really deserves to be held up to perpetual admiration.

It is hardly possible to pick up any copy of the *Garden* without happening upon a number of new ideas full of suggestion of beauty, and certainly there is one in the issue for St. David's Day which is particularly useful. We refer to an account by Mr. J. Hudson of a wall garden built and planted at Gunnersbury in emulation of the ancient walls near Hampton Court. Full and practical explanations show exactly how the task was accomplished in a very brief space of time. Illustrations, dated March, 1901, and September, 1901, show how complete was the vision of beauty created; and a carefully classified list of plants used, climbers, tender plants for recesses, and plants for the top of the wall, tell one exactly how the miracle was worked. That is precisely the kind of thing which gardeners want to know, and it is in these practical directions that much of the great value of the *Garden* consists.

RECOLLECTIONS.

The large spring skies all wide, and blue;
The winds that roamed beside us two!
The madder sticky buds of March;
The tender greenery of the larch!
The crocus with her violet vein;
The damp, and mossy copse, wherein
The primrose pale did peep, and peer,
And listen to the cuckoo near.
And oh! the honeyed amber notes
That bubbled in the thrushes' throats!

ROSAMOND NAPIER.

Those who have a fancy for shark fishing on a really large scale should go to Reykjavik in the spring and take part in the line fishing for large Greenland sharks. Even the bait is original, consisting as often as not of the head of a small seal; otherwise, immense strips of seals' flesh are used. The line is every now and then given a jerk, by way of stimulating the shark's appetite, and it is finally hauled to the surface, its desperate revolutions being neutralised by a stout swivel, the liver cut out, and the huge carcass as a rule cut adrift, though at times the flesh is eaten after being hung for some time. To the jaded sea angler, whose wildest flights of fancy suggest a living sand eel or a lugworm, fishing with a seal's head as bait should certainly prove a novelty, and as the fishing grounds lie at a depth of 200 or 300 fathoms, there could be no question of the excellent exercise if once a 20ft. Greenland shark got hooked.

That the water-beetle (*Dytiscus*) levies heavy toll on the young of such sluggish fish as carp, and that there is unfortunately no known poison that will eliminate the insect without also destroying the fish, has long been a problem with fish breeders. A new terror is now, however, added to our knowledge of insects as the enemies of young fishes, for an American naturalist mentions having observed mosquitoes, at considerable altitudes and only just below the snow-line, pounce down on the larvæ of trout the moment they come to the surface, transfix the brain, and suck out the life juices. And, as if by way of retribution, the same mail brings from another source a reliable antidote for the mosquito pest, which is to introduce golden carp in every possible pond and ornamental water, for the fish greedily devours the aquatic larvæ of the mosquito. So long as the adult fish is as powerful an enemy of the larval insect as the adult insect of the larval fish, we will not wholly despair.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

FEW of our rural characters have undergone more surprising changes of fortune, and to exemplify them and their causes one can scarcely do better than describe a particular district, chosen because very familiar to the writer. There used to be two blacksmiths living within a quarter of a mile of one another, and though both had sons, so great was the pressure of work that each had to hire one journeyman, and sometimes two journeymen. But then how different were the farms! One was a typical old-fashioned holding, with the farmhouse almost in the yard. A brook flowed past, but was dammed just before reaching the high road, in summer the stones of the dam being green and mossy, though at times of flood water passed over with the thunder of a small cataract. A broad margin of flags lined the pond, and the farm servants had their row of red-tiled cottages on its bank. The water was stopped in order that it might supply a mill-race for turning a great wheel that drove the machinery. When the sluice-gate was opened this wheel began to revolve. By the end of September the stack-yard used to be crowded with well-built, neatly-covered corn ricks, which were thrashed by water power in the bad weather. When the machinery went out of order—no infrequent occurrence, since it was old and rickety—the blacksmith was called in to mend it, and was quite equal to the simple task. If you go to that farm to-day you will find the dam pulled down and grass growing where the pond was. Scarcely a cottage, except those of the shepherd and one ploughman, is left, and the stackyard is never full, because so much of the land has been laid down to pasture. The great wheel has long been broken up for firewood, and water power is no longer employed. Instead an itinerant steam thrasher comes once in a while and knocks the work off in a day or two. For it the services of the village smith are not required. It is in charge of two mechanics, who live in a small van attached to the machine and are able to rectify any small mishap. Should anything more serious occur the engine is taken to the yard of the maker of agricultural machinery who supplied it. A gang of labourers also accompanies the van. Nor is the smith any longer asked to supply scythes and sickles for the hayseal and harvest—these implements are supplanted by the hay cutter and reaper. Formerly the mill for crushing beans, the turnip cutter, and other machines were turned by hand, and being simple they were mended by him when out of order, but now the farmer has a small oil-engine and does all this work

with it. At some places he drives the engine with the same fire that boils the pigs' meat. At another farm standing on a hill water was never available, and so the motive power had to be derived from horses that made still more work for the smith, but now the horses as well as the water have been abolished for this purpose. The general adoption of finer machinery has circumscribed the work of the blacksmith.

Very great changes, too, have taken place in the habits of the population. Liming the land used to be a much more

regular system of manuring than now, and a great many carters were employed to carry the lime from the kilns. But a wider adoption of artificials has deprived them of this vocation. The bicycle, too, has proved no friend to the blacksmith. It has enabled many people to dispense with pony and trap, and while horses were employed he had always plenty of shoeing to do, while every local cart or other carriage was sure to come to him sooner or later, as he was wheelwright as well as smith. At the mansion he used to be called in for many jobs, because there, too, only the simplest machinery was employed. Some might have gas, but here the lighting was by oil lamp and wax candle. Lately there has been an electric installation, and electricity is being used for other purposes than lighting. A more fastidious taste has also begun to prevail, and people from towns are called in where his services used to be considered sufficient. He never prided himself greatly on the beauty of his work, but on its solidity and strength, and he is to this day scornful about "the toys and gew-gaws" that have come into vogue. Even the work incidental to a great highway has decreased. Indeed, if you ask the keeper of any remaining wayside inn, he will tell you what an extraordinary diminution of the traffic has taken place, and how many hostleries have had to close in consequence. The train goes almost everywhere, and most of the farmers travel by it instead of by the old spring cart. Posting has greatly diminished. Agricultural produce is less often sent to the station



Miss C. Curle.

RINGING A WHEEL.

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since pastoral work began to be substituted for arable. Old fairs that brought so many horses along the way, and drew together all sorts of wanderers, are now rendered obsolete by the weekly auction marts. One may walk for miles and miles along a country road and meet no vehicle except the light cart of a tradesman delivering goods and touting for orders. These changes have not turned out well for the village blacksmith. Time was when he was busy from morning to night, and his shop, especially in winter-time, was a rendezvous for all the idlers and

gossips. Little heed he used to pay to their chatter as he plied the bellows till his furnace came to a white heat or made the sparks fly as he and his assistant plied their sledge hammers on a glowing bar, or as he shaped a shoe on the ringing anvil. If it were hard weather, a labourer, with frozen beard, would bring the capering horses down from the farm to be "sharped" against the frost, a groom would lead in a horse to be shod, and bring the latest news from the hall, or a traveller who had met with an accident would come to have his trap mended. The loafers who heard all this gossip filled in the rest of the time with criticising the smith's work. It was all in their way. When he was ringing a wheel they watched the process with great attention, from the moment when the red-hot iron rim was brought out and with much hammering, amid a great deal of smoke, fitted to the wheel, till the same wheel was rolled to the pool of water in front of the smithy door till it was cool and ready to go home. They did not only know for whose cart it was intended, but they had probably watched the whole business of putting it together in the carpenter's shop at the other end of the village.

We have sung the glories of the blacksmith mostly in the past tense, but in some districts he is still flourishing. These are the areas of small holdings. On estates largely devoted to pedigree stock there is a curious tendency to imitate the ancient manor and make the place self-supporting. Many of these have quite a range of workshops, and employ their own smiths, joiners, and so forth. When farms run large, again, there must be more or less capital, and part of this is employed in obtaining the latest and most improved machinery, which, when it goes wrong, is not entrusted to the village smith. But small holders cannot afford to follow their example. If a man grows only, say, twenty acres of grain, it would scarcely pay him to hire, far less to buy, a reaper. His most economical implement for cutting is still the sickle. Further, the small holder, who makes his family work, can only lay out one form of capital generously, and that is labour. In other words, his command of cash is limited, and so he makes shift with what he has. Among small holders the smith enjoys nearly all his ancient consequence and prosperity, and on the whole he deserves it. Often you may find one now who has added much to the simple craft of his forefathers; he has probably been for some time in the yard of a great maker and has picked up something about reapers, harvesters, and similar gear, so that at a pinch he can rectify one



F. M. Sutcliffe.

FITTING A SHOE.

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that has gone wrong. Most likely he rides a bicycle himself, and knows enough to do any simple repair. In a word, he has become a sort of rural handy-man, who is prepared to repair all but the graver sort of accidents. Our pictures are very characteristic of him and his craft. In one the father is seen blowing the bellows while the two sons are shaping a horseshoe, while around hang the hammers and other tools of the calling. A second shows the smith resting after his noonday meal and deeply engrossed in his weekly newspaper, which is spread over the anvil, reading perhaps of some skirmish on the veldt where a friend or relative has been engaged. In a third he is ringing a cart wheel, and every scene is one that often must have been witnessed by all who know the life of our English villages.

THE HUDSON'S BAY . . . FUR CATCH, 1902.

MARCH sees the dispersion of the whole of the autumn catch of furs, made when the animals are in the finest condition of coat. The autumn catch from the Hudson's Bay Company's forts, consisting of some 700,000 skins, was on view at the beginning of the month, before the sales, and to those who have been permitted to see, from year to year, the types and supply of the various kinds of fur the scene was as interesting as ever. Hudson's Bay House stands in Lime Street, on the site of the old East India House. This is as it should be, for now that the East India Company is no more, that of Hudson's Bay is the oldest chartered company in the world. In the directors' room are memorials of its earliest days—the charter, with the great seal hanging from it; the portrait of Prince Rupert, one of its first governors; drawings of the fleet owned by the company two centuries or more ago; old wooden vessels with bowsprits sticking upwards, and boatloads of cocked-hatted gentlemen rowing out to them. An early picture, perhaps the first, of a moose adorns the staircase, and Fort Garry, with its back-houses, recalls the recent days of Riel's Rebellion. In the warehouses, where all the



H. P. Hammons.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

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furs are stacked or hanging for the buyers to see, probably nothing has changed for generations, just as there are valued servants of the company to-day who are of the third generation in that honourable employment. The only alteration is in the number and kind of some of the furs. There were only 450 beaver skins there, no sea otter, and there have been no buffalo robes for years. But of the other great staples of the trade there was an abundance. of bear, wolf, otter, red fox, white fox, blue fox, silver fox, marten, mink, lynx, and the rest, there was a vast number of fine quality, with certain skins of exceptional fineness and rarity. In these days before the sales, when intending buyers, in their long white overalls, are quietly looking over the lots and spreading out the sample furs on the old oak tables, mellowed by some 200 years' service, during which greasy furs have done duty for table cloths, it is possible (with the kind permission of the managers) not only to see a large number of individual skins of great interest, but also to test theories about certain animals by the aid of the multitude of examples of skins there collected, questions of size, questions of species, and of the variation of different species in different parts of such a vast slice of the globe as the Hudson's Bay Company draws its supplies from. This is aided by the ancient custom of the company of stating where the different furs come from. Then the sables, or rather martens, are all labelled with the names of the different forts, territories, or part where they were collected. Martens from the far North-West at the Yukon are larger and finer than most others. Otters' skins from the North-West are often nearly 6ft. long, whereas those from the East Coast may be almost one-third less. An animal caught at York Fort may have long, dark fur, while the same species elsewhere has a light, short coat. In the sale catalogues these are labelled with the initials of the collecting area, or with curious contractions, evidently made in a special "font" of type, signifying, to those who know, certain districts. These are among the curiosities of printing, and peculiar to these fur sales. Two of the standing puzzles of North American natural history *qua* furs are the number of species of bear and whether the various foxes are distinct or not. This year's skins seemed to the writer to throw much light on the first. In the "Encyclopædia of Sport" it is stated positively by Mr. Turner-Turner that there are in North America three species of bear *only*, the black bear, the grizzly bear, and the Polar, "the brown bear being a variety only." Anyone who has made a practice of seeing the fur sales will agree with this conclusion. But, as there are a great many brown bears in North America, it is important to know what these are varieties of. Are they crosses, or are they varieties of the black bear or of the grizzly bear? The fur rooms seem to answer the question definitely. The grizzly bears' skins are absolutely different from both the brown bears' and black bears' skins. The coat is generally longer, harsher, and without lustre, which both the others, when in condition, have in a high degree. The grizzlies, though no two are exactly alike, are all alike in general colour and character. Now for the brown and black bears. We arranged a whole series of these,

from a very light smoky snuff colour to jet black. All were about the same size (the adult skins, that is), and there was a complete gradation of hue, from the light snuff colour to black. The character of the fur was exactly the same—soft, fine, and glossy—so that if the skins had been dyed they would all have come out alike. These brown "variety" bears are very plentiful, too. What the great brown bear of Alaska is, whether a grizzly, or a very large "sport" from the black, or a really separate species, is still doubtful. There were no skins of this kind in the Hudson's Bay catch this year. Neither was there any sea otter. But the set of silver fox was very fine, including the very best skin taken for the last seven years or more. It is in perfect condition, and large. The fur is very soft, very long, very lustrous, and almost coal black, with only the faintest sprinkling of silver on the lower part of the back. It will probably fetch a record price, the cost of this fur steadily going up.

These silver fox skins are most suggestive. Their general character is not black sprinkled with silver, but this hoar-frost is often so considerable that the lower half of the skin (*i.e.*, furthest from the head) is light iron grey. Reading yellowish stone colour for black, and giving an extra dash of grey, the "cross fox," a very beautiful skin, shows much the same variation. Then there are the wonderfully bright red foxes, which in our English variety have undergone much the same toning down with black and greyish hairs as some of the silver foxes have. The oddest thing about these North American species is that they are often all found together, silver fox, red fox, cross fox, and blue fox being trapped on the same range of forest. A veteran servant of the company states that his father, who was out in the territory for twenty-two years, believed that the foxes were like domestic cats, to the extent that the vixen had litters in which, just as among kittens, some may be tabby, others black, and others sandy; so there may be a "cross fox" cub, a black fox, and a red one or two, all in a litter. There are great fluctuations in the supply of fur quite apart from the scarcity caused by over-trapping.

C. J. CORNISH.



T. Kent.

NOONDAY REST.

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WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

THE HOUSE-HUNTING OF THE SWANS.

THE swans have been making their annual processions round the premises, keeping up their time-honoured fiction that it is necessary for them to choose a nesting site. As usual, the male swan leads the way with official dignity, and inducts his spouse into the horse-yard and the stables and the cowsheds. Against each of these she has evidently some objection, for they come out again and march, in order as before, all round the fowl-yard. Here a diversion is caused by the empty food pan, which they carefully investigate before proceeding further; but presently they come to the wire fence of the garden. Through this it would seem that they observe many sites that might suit them nicely, for they remain quite a long time discussing the advantages of each in turn; but each has one fatal drawback—the swans cannot discover any means of getting through the fence. So after a while they waddle in all stateliness to the

hedgerow, where the scratching fowls obsequiously make way for the procession. The hedgerow brings them back to the cowsheds, beyond which lies the pond, and at one corner of this a little semi-circle of bushes, fenced off from the cattle and enclosing a few yards of ground, is specially reserved as the swans' nesting site. But it is not etiquette for them to discover this all at once. The end would come much too soon, as it does to a child's fairy tale. So the swans return to the water, as though tired with house-hunting and promising each other to make a fresh excursion to-morrow. In due season the male swan will, by a stroke of genius, discover that little reserved place by the water-side, and with great pride will he lead his wife thereto. And so thoroughly satisfied will she be with his judgment, that before he has finished attitudinising over its merits, she will have begun to pull about some of the straw and reeds which will have been placed there providentially for the purpose of a nest. This, however, is not yet, though the annual house-hunting of the swans is one of the surest signs of coming spring.

THE PERSISTENT PARTRIDGE.

Other house-hunters have visited the fowl-yards in the shape of a pair of partridges, which, in spite of frequent surprises, return thither over and over again in the early morning, when the cock partridge swells his chest and marches round as if he owned the place. Presently, when the boy comes to let out the fowls, the partridges run clucking down the wire fence till they are behind the shrubbery, and then, like the swans, they reconnoitre the desirable country within through the meshes of wire. But they have the advantage of the swans in the matter of unclipped wings, and presently they come whirling over the shrubbery on to the middle of the croquet lawn, whence the publicity of the situation causes them to go clattering and chuckling, one behind the other, with jerking tails, straight up the gravel path towards the kitchen garden. And it is not long before the gardener discovers this unwelcome "sign of spring" among the cabbages. So he "shoo's" them out of it, and they go over the fence again in a flurry of expostulation. But the gardener knows that his labour is in vain. The partridges have made up their mind to nest in the kitchen garden, as they did last year and the year before that. Though he may hunt them out of the place several times a day with obloquy and clods of earth, they will always be there when he comes back from dinner. Later on, when real spring has come, they will seem to have disappeared from the garden, though the cock bird will be suspiciously jealous in guarding the strip of outside pasture which adjoins the fence. One day, perhaps, someone will stumble upon a nestful of eggs in the horse-radish bed, or among the feathery fennel clumps. Or it may be that we shall know nothing until we surprise an agitated hen partridge among the peas with a healthy family of sixteen chicks scattered in all directions and pretending to be clods of earth. When a partridge has made up his mind to locate his wife and family where he nested safely last year, you will have to hire a special bird boy to prevent him.

WOODPECKERS CALLING.

One of the pleasantest tokens of coming spring has been the calling of green woodpeckers all over the park. In the open country, when a solitary woodpecker has strayed thither, you may see him sitting upright on some high branch of a commanding tree uttering his ringing, laughing call and then pausing for a response. None coming, he will call again, perhaps many times in succession; but at last he will take wing, and in dropping loops of flight will cover the straight distance to another conspicuous tree perhaps a quarter of a mile away. Then he will call again, and, failing response, will pass on as before. But for the wandering woodpecker whom chance leads into the park, it

is no question of listening in vain for voices of his kind, but of making good his right to raise his own voice among so many rivals. From half-a-dozen directions over the oak-clustered expanse of turf, dotted with hares like molehills, the cheery woodpecker voices are ringing, now with a rhythmic peal of measured calls and now with the single note of affirmative response.

ALLIED VOICES.

It is interesting in showing the value of the voices of birds as evidence of relationship, that the nuthatch, whose habits are largely those of the woodpecker, has the same dual call-note and response. Like the woodpecker, too, he has an astonishingly loud voice for his size, although, as he slips along the tree-bark in his buff-vested suit of Quaker grey, he is seldom noticed. Even when seen he is often mistaken for a tit; and his habits seem to place him halfway between the woodpeckers and the tits. So does his voice; for the characteristic of the tits is also a dual call-note, consisting of the rapid repetition of a single note in one case, and of a solitary piping note in the other. So similar are the calls of these different birds in character too, that while the woodpecker seems to emit a loud and musical guffaw, the nuthatch has a liquid laughing note, while the tit's voice is a sharp little titter. Indeed, if no other deviation were established, the original name of "titmouse" might well have been "tittermouse."

THE USE OF A SPIKY TAIL.

The gradation in voice, size, and structure between these allied birds is reflected in their habits. The woodpecker, with long and powerful bill, has converted himself into a sort of animated hammer, driving its sharp point deep into the rotten wood where beetles' larvæ burrow. Clutching the bark with his strong feet, which are specially adapted to grip tight against the equal shock of impact and recoil for the next blow, he relies also upon the springy impulse which his tail gives him. For this is spread out slightly fanwise and closely pressed against the bark, each feather ending in a stiff point, so that when he swings back for the stroke the elasticity of each quill adds force to its delivery. It is usually supposed that the use of these pointed tail feathers is to save the bird from falling; but that this is not the case appears plainly when you see the bird making equal use of its tail when working upon the under-side of a horizontal branch. Here the effect of the close pressure of the tail against the bark would be to thrust the bird away from it and cause it to fall, although at such times, when the bird is working back downwards, it would need more support than ever.

HABITS AND STRUCTURE.

And if the spiked tail helped the woodpecker in climbing and saved it from falling, it would not be easy to understand why the nuthatches and tits, equally expert and more daring in their tree trunk acrobatics, need no such help. On the other hand, when you recognise the utility of the fan of stiff-pointed quills in adding force to the woodpecker's blows, you see at once why neither nuthatch nor tits require them; for, while the first is always hammering for his food, the others only resort to it upon occasion, the nuthatch using his stout straight bill to prize off fragments of bark or dead wood with a strong forward and sideways action of his muscular neck, while the tits obtain most of their food by minutely searching for it in crevice or leaf bud. The tree-creeper, although its slender bill may not drive its way into solid dead wood, uses its tail in the same way as the woodpecker, and hammers through the slender partitions of insects' cells which betray themselves at a tap. At any rate, you may see him clinging, like the woodpecker, back downwards under a branch, yet evidently using its tail to add momentum to its blows.

E. K. R.

THE POTTER'S WHEEL.

NO doubt there are many persons who are fully alive to the particular value of terra-cotta as a garden decoration, and as a means of expressing numberless fancies, quaint, charming, or artistic, according to the individuality employing it. But there have been hitherto serious difficulties in the way of its general adoption by English garden-lovers. Italy, where from time immemorial the artist hand has moulded these brick-earths into forms of art as full of life and individuality as those chiselled in marble or carved in wood, is a far cry from England when things fragile are in question, and many are the breakages, and great the consequent disappointments, when attempts are made to transport them therefrom.

This drawback, fortunately, need no longer hinder the widespread use of the art of modelling in terra-cotta, in its endless range of form and ornament, as an especially appropriate grace to English gardens. In the village of Compton, near Guildford, there now exists an industry interesting on various counts, not the least being that it deals satisfactorily with this question of the decorative garden pot.

In a picturesque tiled "workshop" nestling on the side of that curious Surrey ridge, the Hog's Back, Mrs. G. F. Watts has comfortably housed the work which has only in the last year been growing from the

recreative evening class into a village industry, the first object of which is to establish a little colony, in the heart of the country, of intelligent happy workers, who, trained in eye, mind, and hand, will take pride in making, as the guild of artists did long ago



G. Andrews.

SUNDIAL MADE FOR MR. G. F. WATTS.

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G. Andrews.

SOME COMPTON FLOWER-BOXES.

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in Italy, their village name known in association with their craft. The great question of decentralisation from our large cities is, at the same time, always kept in view. The progress already made is astonishing, and the work in terra-cotta turned out here is quite as good as that coming from Italy. Vases and pots of exquisitely graceful outline, plain or ornamented with designs of interlacing serpents or linked bands, richly worked tiles and panels, some meant to be built up into great centre-pots, others intended for decoration, garden seats, sundials ranging from simplicity to elaborateness—these are some of the things to be seen stacked in the showroom or lying about outside.

The upper room of the workshop is pleasant to look in upon. Half-a-dozen boys from perhaps fourteen to eighteen are busy, under the direction of a capable Scotch manager, on different pieces of work. One is carefully undercutting the figures on a wall sundial of yellow clay, before filling them in effectively with white. He is interested in his work, and explains with some importance how the undercutting holds the filling fast and prevents its dropping out. This dial has been designed by the lady ordering it, for any design can be copied at the Compton Pottery, and classic models are occasionally made to harmonise with classical ornament already existing in some old garden.

Another boy is deftly fashioning the intertwining mouldings on the "wide, sweet curve" of a vase, and as one watches him one begins to feel the true meaning of this rural workshop. To offer boys, intelligent enough to appreciate the interest of such work, a refuge from the discontent with the country quiet and dullness, which tempts them to wander up to London, only to realise what poverty in its most hopeless and vicious forms can be, is surely a thing of immense importance. For here they are shown the beauty of noble lines and curves, the grace of clustering foliage, or delicate petal; their hands are taught to make beautiful things, and their eyes opened to the loveliness crowding their little world of field and copse, and thus an unfailing source of interest is opened up to them whereby life may be marvellously enriched.

A seated figure of our late Queen and a statuette or two, very perfect and delicate in finish, attract attention by their excellence of workmanship. One of the latter is of Mr. Watts himself, a charming little work of art not nine inches high; another, also a successful portrait, is a graceful figure of a girl in evening dress, her opera-cloak thrown loosely back in long flowing folds. They are the work of a former pupil, now studying advanced art, and serve as an incentive to the boys to aim high.

A feature of the Pottery not exactly connected with garden ornament, but very fascinating, is the quaint "sleep-blessing" worked in clays of different shades. It is in the form of a long low panel, to be set into the wall above a bed, and a favourite design for it shows the four angels, assigned by the old verse to the four corners, with an appropriate motto written in the scroll beneath.

Descending to practical household matters, one finds another Compton speciality in the shape of store-room jars, glazed inside, for holding grains, dried fruits, and so on, each bearing on its lid some pretty device of flower, leaf, or berry.

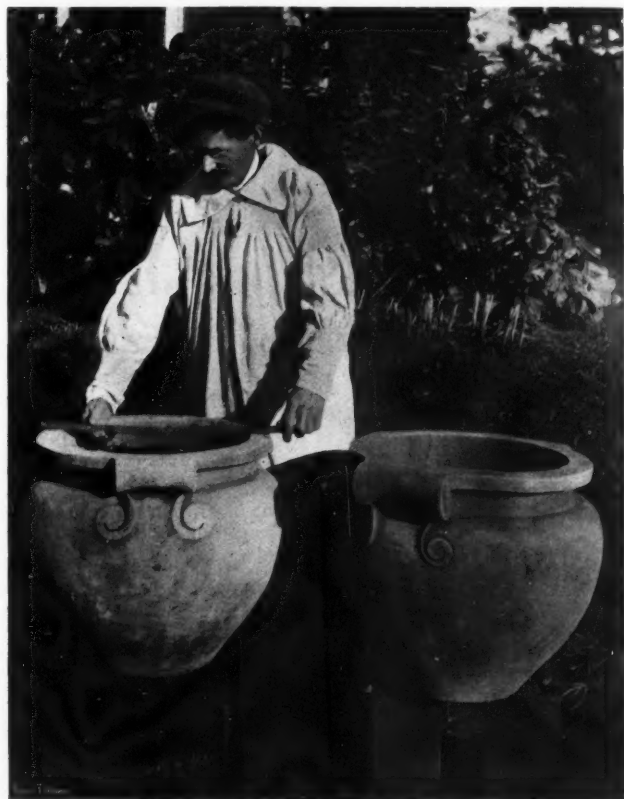
Garden ornaments, however, are the characteristic work

of the Pottery. One vase-model in particular deserves mention for its singularly graceful form, which resembles somewhat the ancient amphora. It is placed in a simple iron stand of three curving rods ending in scrolls and banded together, and makes a very charming holder for a trailing plant. Some of the larger vases are adorned with a border of animals' heads; intertwined serpents wind themselves about others; and one very effective pattern is adapted from the interlacing scrolls used in Celtic art.

Both the red and yellow clays used in the Pottery are found on the spot, and by skilful manipulation yield shades of colour varying from white to almost brownish red. In the lower part of the pretty work-building, which is as unlike the usual hideous factory as its surroundings of woods and fields are unlike the latter's sordid precincts, is the drying-room, from which the pale grey and yellow "pots" emerge mellowed to their proper hue.

The staff employed is, in so young a work, necessarily small, but is growing steadily, for the industry has great possibilities for a workman with real artistic gifts to become a highly paid member of an artistic guild, such as the Compton terra-cotta work may develop into. As orders already come in as fast as they can be executed, there seems to be a bright future for the industry. It is certainly full of vigorous life, for, besides making its own way so well, it has thrown off a branch to Scotland, where a goodly number of Highlanders are being taught artistic pottery. One of the potter's wheels, of which there are two, is worked by a village lad, who has become surprisingly expert in shaping thereon the graceful forms peculiar to the Compton Industry. Indeed, the progress made by all the boys in the short space of time during which they have been at work is a striking and hopeful feature of Mrs. Watts's venture.

In its relation to the Garden Beautiful, special stress may be laid upon the sundials made there. The subject of sundials is in itself a study full of interest, which has of late claimed its own share of attention, but the possibilities of a dial in a garden picture are as yet perhaps scarcely realised. Picturesque and suggestive it always is, whether on a wall or a pedestal, and the garden lacking it seems to miss its most characteristic trait; but it is rarely used as the keynote of a bit of garden composition.



G. Andrews.

A COMPTON WORKMAN.

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And yet in terra-cotta, nothing could better give the right tone, both in colour and feeling, to a carefully planned scheme.

The stiff Queen Anne style, with its precise flower-beds and primly-clipped hedges, would find its harmonious complement in one of the formal upright dials to be seen in the Compton showroom, whilst just the touch needed to a delightful old-world corner is one of the curiously-figured wall-dials mottoed like posyrings. "I count no hours that are not bright" runs one of these, breathing the spirit of the long-ago days when people took life calmly, and idled their leisure time carelessly amongst sweet old-fashioned flowers.

Dignity of design, also, can be well expressed by these sundials. One which is intended as a memorial to Queen Victoria is very impressive in effect. Its pillar, raised on a base forming a seat, is richly ornamented with symbolic designs. The Arms of the Kingdoms, their four saints, with hand raised in the act of blessing, and the wreath of rose, shamrock, thistle, and leek, unite with the motto "Let your light so shine" to symbolise the noble rule and character of her who "wrought her people lasting good." The apex is formed of four figures springing from the orb, and holding up a crown of love.

Such a dial as this, quaintly marking time by light and



G. Andrews. *IN TERRA-COTTA AND IRON.* Copyright

shade, and itself a symbol of life and death and all earthly existence, would form a fitting memorial for some garden which our late Queen had honoured, as a permanent remembrance of her presence there.

Perhaps a word may be added anent the higher meaning of this work, to which the clue is given by the stamp of the Potteries, in the symbol of which is embodied the aspiration desired for the work, with its words from the mystic prophet's vision, "Their work was as a wheel in the middle of a wheel," and its outer and inner winged wheels. The idea is of the wheel of labour, almost mechanical in its daily round, yet part of a vast accomplishment, and winged by human hand and thought for the spiritual flight into the unseen, of which, as well as of shelter, protection, movement, and life, the wheel was the fine old symbol. Within the inner wheel is also a Celtic symbol of the sun, a reminder that the wheel of life must move "sunwise."

To work, even in a small way, for this country of ours by trying to stay the evil which is robbing her of her strong men, and giving her instead a generation of puny city children, to stem the tide of emigration from country to town, which is beginning to confront English statesmen as a grave and menacing



G. Andrews. *A CHARMING CORNER.* Copyright

danger, was the aim of its foundress in setting the potter's wheel working within the great wheel of national life.

The educational value of such artistic work as the Compton Industry is very great, for mind as well as hand. The ornament designed by Mrs. Watts for the decoration of the Pottery is not only beautiful in itself, but full of symbolism, and likely to set the lads working upon it thinking as little else in their lives could.

Upon a little hill on the outskirts of the village, in its cemetery, stands a tiny mortuary chapel, given by Mr. Watts to the hamlet. It is a gem of design and ornamentation, and is the work of the Compton people, under the guidance of Mrs. Watts, who devised it all. Its exterior is rich in friezes carried out in



G. Andrews. *POT WITH TERRA-COTTA PANELS.* Copyright

the terra-cotta panels, its door was carved by the village carpenter, and the village blacksmith wrought the ornamental ironwork for it. Its interior will be a storehouse of imagery and a wealth of colour.

It was in the making of the terra-cotta panels that the idea of the pottery originated, and the little chapel on its hill, raised for the last rites of their dead, stands to these Surrey villagers as the centre of their intellectual and artistic life.

IN THE GARDEN.

THE HORTICULTURAL CLUB.

THIS famous club, composed of many well-known amateur and professional horticulturists, has just lost the services of its founder, the Rev. H. D'Ombrain, vicar of Westwell, in Kent, who has been compelled through his great age and infirmities to resign the honorary secretaryship of this and the National Rose Society. At the annual meeting recently, Sir J. T. Llewelyn, Bart., late M.P. for Swansea, in the chair, it was mentioned that Mr. E. T. Cook, co-editor of the *Garden*, had agreed to act in Mr. D'Ombrain's place, while the newly-instituted office of treasurer would be filled by Mr. H. J. Veitch, East Burnham Park, Slough. The Rev. W. Wilks, secretary of the Royal Horticultural Society, vicar of Shirley, and raiser of the beautiful "Shirley" Poppies, said at both the annual meeting and dinner which followed it that the club should have an immense influence for good in horticultural circles in this country. One of its objects was to show hospitality to distinguished visitors from abroad, and do the work that it was impossible for such a large society as the Royal Horticultural Society to carry out. Dr. Henry, the celebrated traveller in China, who discovered Lilium Henryi and many plants we cherish in our gardens, will be the guest of the club on April 8th.

ROSA LUTEA: ITS VARIETIES AS STANDARDS.

A frequent contributor to the garden notes writes about *Rosa lutea* and its varieties as standards: "It cannot be generally known what beautiful objects these Roses are when grown as standards, or they would be more extensively planted. Any good Rose soil, in which the hedge Briar flourishes, will suit this group perfectly. When grown as bushes their flower beauty is somewhat hidden, as the growths have a strong weeping tendency, but the standard or half-standard prevent this. The first spring after planting cut the growths back close, the upper eye of each shoot looking outward. The following spring no pruning will be required beyond removing extreme points. These Roses always flower upon the wood of the previous summer, and principally towards the ends of the growths. To keep up a supply of new wood, look over the trees after flowering, and cut hard back some of the growths. The type *R. lutea* is certainly the most beautiful single yellow Rose in our gardens, and its coppery red variety, known as bicolor or punicea, also as Austrian Copper, is one of the most distinct in point of colour. Both Roses were grown by Gerarde in 1596, so that they are perhaps the oldest Roses in cultivation by the present generation. It seems almost incredible that such beautiful hardy Roses should have been neglected so long by hybridists, not so much for the sake of improving these particular Roses, as that would be almost impossible, as to impart their wonderful colouring to other types. I believe Lord Penzance was the first to make use of the Austrian Copper, the result being the finely coloured Sweet Briar Lady Penzance. M. Pernet-Ducher has also recently used the double-flowered Persian yellow with the object of producing a perpetual-flowering group. How far he has succeeded remains to be seen. Certainly the variety Soleil d'Or will be most valuable on account simply of its hardiness."

AMONGST THE ROSES.

As one of our most successful Rose-growers once remarked to the writer, "No one who has the choice will substitute spring for autumn planting of Roses"; but it is not always possible to plant in October or November, the two best months for the work, so that spring must be selected, with happy results in most cases. We planted last spring several hundred Roses, and immediately afterwards came that withering frost that made one feel uncomfortable for many days, until the opening leaf-buds proclaimed a safe voyage through the weather storm. Out of three or four hundred plants about two succumbed, and never have we seen a Rose garden so full of flowers, or so perfumed with the odours of Tea, Noisette, and the Old Pink China. The authority just mentioned says that two simple rules must be observed in planting now. One is to make certain of the soil being suitable, and another that the plants are sound. Wherever practical, ridge up the ground, or trench it some time before planting; but in the case referred to the builders' rubbish was only cleared away in time to plant the Roses in March, so that even elaborate trenching and exposing the soil to the air are not always needful. It is not wise, however, to run risk, and this advice to trench and ridge is wholesome, and will bring its own good reward. In planting, carefully spread out the roots, shaking amongst them some of the finer particles of soil, and if the roots seem at all dry soak them for an hour or two in water, and then dip them in thin mud. Leave a saucer-like hollow round each plant to prevent the water given from passing away too rapidly, but when the Rose is well established, fill up the hollow with fine soil and hoe or lightly fork the ground occasionally. It is important to plant when growth is dormant. In many nurseries, at this season, one may see bushes and standards that have been heeled in, and therefore remain dormant much longer than those not moved at all. Prune the growths back fairly hard before planting is done, cutting them to within five or six eyes. The writer has a note from a well-known Rosarian about this spring planting, in which he says: "In the case of Tea Roses I have transplanted as late as April 20th, and they grew and flowered abundantly the same year, much later than plants put in earlier, thus prolonging the flowering season." When prominent gaps must be filled up, where in the summer a

failure or two would mean unsightly blanks, or upset some scheme of colouring, procure plants in pots; those known as extra sized, although a trifle more costly than bushes lifted from the open ground, thrive with great vigour if very carefully transplanted.

PRUNING ROSES.

This is a familiar theme at this season, and is a wide subject. Climbing Roses must be pruned after flowering, when old growths should be removed to allow the new blossom-bearing wood to ripen. Practically such Roses need no pruning, merely an annual clearing out of useless wood. Show Roses require very careful treatment; but those contemplating exhibiting must buy a special guide upon the subject. Tea Roses, that is, the Anna Oliviers, Marie Van Houttes, and other lovely varieties, that are a pleasant memory after their luscious flowering, require pruning about the middle of April, and the extent of the pruning will depend upon the condition of the plants. When the growths are sound, with white pith, they may be allowed to remain a good length where a quantity of flowers is desired. When, however, they have got damaged by frost, cut hard back. Sometimes a growth, otherwise promising, will have a large brown blotch on it; this shows either injury from frost or through some insect, so cut past this blemish. The advice of the Rosaria already referred to is: "Although I do not advocate hard pruning of Tea Roses as a general rule, I have proved the beneficial effect of severe pruning every three or four years. Many affirm that they never had such fine Tea Roses as followed a severe cutting back occasioned by a sharp winter."

DEATH OF MR. SELFE LEONARD.

We are grieved to know that Mr. Leonard, whose name is well known in gardening circles, was killed recently in Rome, as the result of a fall on the stairway of an hotel. Mr. Leonard was what the world calls an "amateur." He was never by profession a nurseryman, although he formed, in the later years of his life—at first, we understand, as a hobby—the Hardy Plant Company at Guildford and Compton. His keen knowledge of alpine flowers in their natural haunts and under cultivation was shown by his many articles and notes to the horticultural Press, and by his wonderful grouping in the pretty rock garden attached to his house, Hitherbury, at Millmead, on the hilltop at Guildford. In the full flush of spring a few hours spent with Mr. Leonard here was a pure delight. The whole garden was covered with flowers and set out in a way to make their aspect as natural as possible within a comparatively small area. The rock garden and many other peeps at Hitherbury were illustrated in *COUNTRY LIFE* for September 7th, 1901, and we advise those who wish to know more of Mr. Leonard's work than it is possible to give in a paragraph to refer to that description. Our late friend was a member of the Floral Committee of the Royal Horticultural Society, a keen chess player, and much respected in his wide circle of friends of Guildford and elsewhere. He was one of the first to show alpine flowers as if on some rockwork at the large exhibitions, and his displays at the Temple exhibitions remain a pleasant memory.

GARDEN NOTES FOR THE COLONIES AND ABROAD.

We have received the sixth edition of these well-known notes issued by Messrs. J. Carter and Co., High Holborn, London. It is, indeed, a gardening guide for all British possessions, and information is given as to the kinds to sow, when to do so, and other matters applicable to the individual district, one note applying, for example, to Abyssinia, another to Egypt, and so on. The information about Bermuda shows the nature of these "Garden Notes": "A group of islands in the Atlantic Ocean, between here and North America, largely used as a pleasure resort by Americans. They possess a lovely climate, and the soil is of such a nature that profitable crops of both vegetables and flowers are grown everywhere. Indeed, it is so fine that there is almost a perpetual seedtime, and crops succeed one another with marvellous rapidity. All the good things of more temperate climes appear to thrive in remarkable luxuriance—Tea Roses in profusion, Jessamine growing wild in every direction, the Oleander and Hibiscus are common hedge plants. Amaryllis and Freesias are weeds, Lilies are grown by the acre, chiefly the White Easter species. Potatoes, Carrots, Onions, Tomatoes, dwarf Beans, white Turnips, Cauliflowers, Cabbage, Lettuce, Radish, and Spinach thrive when sown almost all the year round, although perhaps the best months for the operation range from September to May. At many seasons the fields are brighter than the gardens, but Bermuda is a land of flowers at all times."

"PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY PASTURES."

The sixth edition of this work, by Mr. Martin John Sutton, reminds one of the value of a profoundly practical and instructive volume about pasture lands giving descriptions and illustrations of leading natural grasses and clovers. The text in the present edition has been revised throughout and brought up to date; some important statistics concerning the area under grass are added, and the section on temporary pastures has been extended. One of the most interesting chapters is about worthless grasses. They are arranged alphabetically, with brief descriptions and ways to get them, a chapter of some use to those concerned in the sister branch of horticulture. What can be simpler than the description of "Docks"? It runs thus: "Docks (Rumex) are found on all farms. The species most troublesome in grass lands are *R. obtusifolius* and *R. crispus*, both perennials, flowering and seeding abundantly. In the South of England the flowering period is about the first or second week in June, and the destruction of plants should be accomplished before that time. By means of the docking-iron, when the ground has been softened by rain, the whole of the tap-root can be removed, and it is important not to leave a remnant, as fresh growth will give renewed trouble. Should there be no opportunity of drawing the roots, frequent cutting at the collar will weaken the Docks, and when persistently followed up will reduce their numbers. It is a mischievous practice to throw Docks into ditches or under hedges; very little moisture is requisite to maintain life and enable them to perfect seed. Comparatively few samples of Clover harvested in this country are entirely free from Dock seed, but it is a true economy to ensure a pure sample."



G. Andrews. ST. PATRICK. Copyright.
From the Queen Victoria Memorial Sundial.

ANIMAL EXPRESSION.—II.

SOMEbody else has said that to hunt the fox you must have a foxy mind, but I think a houndy mind would have been nearer the mark, for I am sure that to hunt either hounds, pointers, setters, or retrievers it is not nearly as necessary to know what the quarry is likely to do under various circumstances as what the dog is certain to do right, and where he is almost certain to fail and require human assistance to set him right. Certain it is that the less they are set right the less they will require it, in reason; but there are occasions when leaving them alone is the worst possible policy, and then is the time when expression has to be read, not merely from the face of the dog, but from what he does and has omitted to do. I remember on one occasion, by no means singular, but to be remembered because it lost a field trial prize, that a towered bird had been marked down. Well, a certain setter soon obtained a point at this grouse, and those who knew her took it for a point at the dead bird, and did not check her when, with expression peculiar to the occasion, she went in to put her foot on the dead bird in her usual manner; but the supposed dead bird had only been hit in the head and rose again, and flew away unharmed probably, except for a small blood



HORTON CHERRY.

sure there are grouse up there somewhere, but when the scent comes down hill like this it comes in eddies round one hillock perhaps, and over the next, but never comes direct from the bird to the dog, and the utmost the most experienced of their kind can do under the circumstances is to say as this dog is doing, "You only stop there until the gun comes up, and then I'll show you where you are." This is very different to the message from Lawn III., for she is on partridges, the ground is flat, the scent has come direct into her nose, and now she begins to perceive that the birds are moving away from under her very nose as it were, and that they do not mean to lie until the guns come up; and motionless as she stands she looks uneasy, as if these proceedings on the part of the birds were not in the rules of the game. One word of compliment to Lawn III. before passing, for she appears here to be a remarkably symmetrical dog, with plenty of power, and that absence of the short-cloddiness that the show judges so often reward. A son of Senor Don Pedro does not make false points, for as no man is a hero to his own valet, no dog can lie to his own sister and be believed, and here the sister's every attitude expresses firm conviction; although she is quite unable to scent the game herself she probably would by now have got a taste of it had she as good a nose as her brother, for she is very near, and almost to direct leeward of the birds, as their position is indicated by the pointing brother. Mr. Mitchell thinks "A Nice Point" the best

photograph he has ever taken in his life, and as far as I have seen them he is unquestionably right. I am told, however, it is over-small for reproduction, and I fear that enlargement, which



HORTON MAJOR.

wound that had deceived the setter into believing the bird a dead one. I am afraid I cannot describe that expression. Perhaps it is slightly different in different dogs, but they all know whether they have dead or wounded game in front of them, and know it instantly from uninjured game, although they probably cannot tell the difference between wounded and dead. Not long ago I was looking at a picture of one of Mr. Arkwright's pointers that he has in his billiard-room at Sutton Scarsdale, and he told me a remarkable thing about expression in the dog, not in the least to be wondered at as such; but it appears that after one of his most celebrated dogs was sent down to George Earl to paint, and when the picture came back, the breaker was called in to look at it, and he immediately exclaimed, "But why did he paint him pointing a rabbit?" The answer was that there was nothing else but a tame rabbit within call of the artist's studio, and so the expression had been conveyed to canvas.

The only photograph I can find in the least suggestive of the dead bird is Horton Major, and probably I am wrong, for I see a grouse butt on the hill behind, suggestive of a driving county and of dog breaking—merely exercise before the Twelfth of August. Horton Cherry is a very different point. She is quite



BROXWOOD KING WORKING ON GROUSE.

*A NICE POINT.*

not only enlarges the picture, but also each of the millions of grains of the bromide of silver out of which the picture is made up, will not help the clearness.

Here the dogs have passed each other in their range before they detect the scent, which evidently has been caught by both at the same instant of time. Possibly the far-off dog is not sure, but as his head comes round to the scent he sees his fellow's bold upright point, a sight which confirms his nose and holds him

rigid in the splendid attitude of enquiry in which he is seen. The birds are probably many and far off too. The height of the heads speaks to the distance, and the numbers must be there also, for two dogs so far away, or wide from each other, both to get the body scent. Probably the grouse have begun to feed in the afternoon, and then a large brood would create a body scent over as wide a space as this; if not, then there must be a pack in front, perhaps 100yds. or 300yds. away,

*LAWN III.*

a distance at which grouse never can be found except by the combination of the best-nosed dogs in first-rate scenting weather, and on a moor like this one, as flat as Caithness. Boxwood King has been coming down hill at a pace, but body scent has put on the break instantly when another couple of strides would have tumbled him into the birds. The twist round of the body indicates that the forequarters stopped before the impetus behind could be stayed, so that the "all of a heap" character of the point is explained; the turned head indicates the position of the grouse, slightly only on one side of the line of the gallop. The face expression is that of a good dog conscious that he has done his duty, and willing to wait where he is until the guns come up, even if it should please them to sit down to lunch to test his patience. Rapid Ranger of Bromfield is drawing to his game, his breaker evidently going with him, but out of the way of the camera. The lip expression indicates that champing of the air to taste and retaste the scent, so suggestive of making



A SON AND DAUGHTER OF SENOR DON PEDRO.

did have a superabundance of wind when it came to hot sun or steep hill sides. This, and not their colour, is their most particular difference from English setters.

Pointers and setters have the hardest work to do of any sporting dogs whatever, not excepting foxhounds; moreover, their training and sense must be of a higher order than any of the others, or they could not do the work required of them. Either of them, but especially the setter, can be trained to retrieve very easily, and when this is done, the result is generally a far better retriever than an ordinary dog of the breed so called. But no retriever can be trained as a pointer or setter—not that the breaking would be difficult, but the ability to get about would be altogether tenth-rate compared with even moderate animals of the pointing and setting dogs. A good specimen of either of these breeds ought to be able to range 200yds. each side of the gun as the shooter walks forward at a distance of 60yds. to 80yds. That is to say, the dogs cover 400yds. to the man's 60yds. or 80yds.

The rate of progress of the shooter would probably not exceed three miles an hour, but even this would make the dogs' speed, in



THE BLUE TICKED ENGLISH SETTER.

the most of a real good glass of port. This champing is a very curious practice, and one that I can only explain by the necessity for expelling the scent from the nostrils if it is to be redetected. This seems probable, because in our own sense of smell a constant scent is soon unrecognised, and it is only change from fresh to tainted air, and back again, that enables the brain to recognise what is there by means of the nose. Ranger goes one foot at a time to his birds with a stiff stern, crawling to them up hill, which means a certain shot if the grouse happen to be just over the brow of the hill.

The blue ticked English setter is not quite as much my sort as Ranger is, either in make and shape, in beauty or in expression. But I hear he is a good one, and regret that I never saw him in life. There is a want of earnestness about his expression which contrasts with the others, although I never agreed with those critics who condemned Landseer's "Gordons on Ptarmigan" because they opened their mouths and exhibited hanging tongues. It was really very true of the black and tans and very expressive of the fact that they are a breed which require plenty of breathing room and never



RAPID RANGER OF BROMFIELD.

range, from fifteen to twenty miles an hour. While they are travelling like this they are nevertheless not attending to their progress in the least; their whole senses are occupied with something entirely different. They are thinking only of game, and while they rely almost exclusively on the sense of smell, their eyes and ears are always in use for the one purpose they have in view. So much is this the case that their preoccupation frequently prevents them hearing the whistle; and often, if their handler were to turn back and leave the field, or to lie down in the heather, the dogs would continue to range, in the belief that they were being followed up, and would probably go on like this until a point was obtained. Then the pointing dog would look round very soon to see when the gun was coming. What dogs would do under such circumstances when no gun did come depends very much upon the character of the individuals. Some of them would become nervous, and give up the point to find their breaker; such as these could very soon be trained to perform the feat they think so much of in Norway, where dogs are trained to break the point and come and fetch the guns, and then lead them back until the point at the original find is re-established. Some would remain for several hours, no doubt, as their ancestors often have for bets and so on, and a few would perhaps break in and try to catch the crouching birds. These differences in the characters of individuals make it impossible to be sure from photographs what the originals of them were doing exactly. One would want to know the dogs very well, to be sure. For instance, one dog characteristically points with its stern almost straight up, another holds his straight out, and yet a third will give to his stern a kink in the end, only put on during the point, and this kink may be at right angles with the stern. Sometimes I have seen a stern held horizontally and at the tip turned at right angles, so that the latter pointed straight downwards. The stern on point was therefore like a walking-stick with a crook handle.



ENGLISH SETTERS ASLEEP.

Again, one dog, when he was sure, always pointed by placing both fore-legs flat on the ground, and standing up with his hind-quarters and with his flag well up. It was the most striking and beautiful point, but any individuality of this sort would be clearly very misleading to those who did not know the performers, and I can only hope there are none such here, or at least amongst those of the dogs that I do not happen to know in the life.

The last picture of all, English setters asleep, is suggestive that it is lunchtime, and that dogs are as glad of the midday rest as are the guns. "Do Dogs Dream?" would form a pretty subject for an article, because they do dream and talk in their sleep too, and I have even seen them indulge in all the usual vocal remonstrance, but in an undertone, when an imaginary thrashing has been in progress. G. T. TEASDALE-BUCKELL.

THE GREAT WHITE "HARNSEE."

"NO, bor," replied old Zack Thrower to "Jarge" Huglett, the Breydon smelter; "no, bor; I aint one as is aizy tuke in about bads (birds), nor about many things nayther, if yow want ter know. I ha' lived tu long on th' mashes not to know what's what an' what aint, as yow might say. But I oont say as how I worn't fairly had about th' gret white harnsee (heron); an' though I aint one as care to be med a grin on, seein' it's ony yow, I'll tel' ye th' story."

"Yow see, thatty year ago I wor thiaty year younger 'n I be now, an' though I thowt I knew a sight, there wor some things I knew no more about than a babe unborn. But bads worn't one on 'em. A'most from th' time when I wor scace big enow to cut my own wittels I had sildom gone abroad 'ithout carryin' a gun wi' me—ayther under my arm or under my coat—an' some winters I hadn't no nade ter go a-wherryin', or deek-drawin', or du nowt what yow might call rale work; gunnin' tuke up all my time, an' arnt me all I wor wantin'. Some years there wor sich a hape of fowl about th' mashes that I wor arter 'em night an' day for days together; at other times I'd come across a rare bad what 'ud fetch as much as I got for a dozen duck. So a-course I allus kep' a eye a-lifin' for anything what wor out o' th' common-like, for if I got a night harnsee or a black calloo (glossy ibis) I knew what to do wi' un."

"Sich bein' th' case, it arn't surprisin' that when I heerd as how owd Jack Roberts had shot a gret white harnsee on th' mashes, not a mile from my house, I wor a bit riled tu think I hadn't come across th' bad afore him. Still I didn't say nowt to no one about it until a day or tew arterwuds, when I dropped into th' Ferry Inn at Reedmere an' overheard tew chaps a-talkin' about owd Jack's luck. He tuke th' bad, one on 'em say, to Norwich, an' a gent there—I knowed him well—who wor a-collectin' rare bads, gin him five pund for it. Says I, 'That's more'n owd Jack ha' arnt by hard work this five year'; an' one o' th' chaps—I didn't know him then, but heerd arterwuds he wor a Budd from out Hicklin' way—he say, 'Yes, an' if he kape a gude luke-out he may git th' tother.' 'Th' tother what?' says I. 'Why, th' tother bad,' says he. 'Why,' says I, 'what's there another on 'em about?' 'Aye, bor,' says he, 'that there be, an' it wor sin nigh Alder Carr Fleet ony this mornin'.' 'Yow don't say so,' says I. 'Tha's right enow,' says he, 'for I heerd o' it from owd Jack hisself.' I didn't say no more, but thinks I to myself, 'Zack, bor, if yow aint awake afore owd Jack to-morra mornin' yow owt never to howd a gun again."

"That night I went home at eight o'clock, walkin' as straight a line as a grabe's flight. My poor owd mother, when she see me come in, loked right skered. Says she, 'Why, Zack, bor, was amiss wi' yow? Don't yow fale well?' 'I'm all right, owd gal,' says I; 'don't yow worrit about me. I ha' got a mind to be up arly to-morra mornin'!' Wi' that I tuke off my bates an' went up to bed."

"Next mornin', afore daylight, I wor up an' dre-sed an' out on th' mashes. It wor a winter mornin', an' no mistake! It had fruz durin' th' night—a reg'lar rimer—an' everythin' wor as white as if there'd bin a fall o' snow. Thinks I to myself, just as it begun tu git light, there might be a dozen gret white harnsees within half a mile o' me an' I shoun't see 'em unless they got up; but I clamber'd on tu th' river-wall, an' started for Alder Carr Fleet. It wor a tree-mile walk,

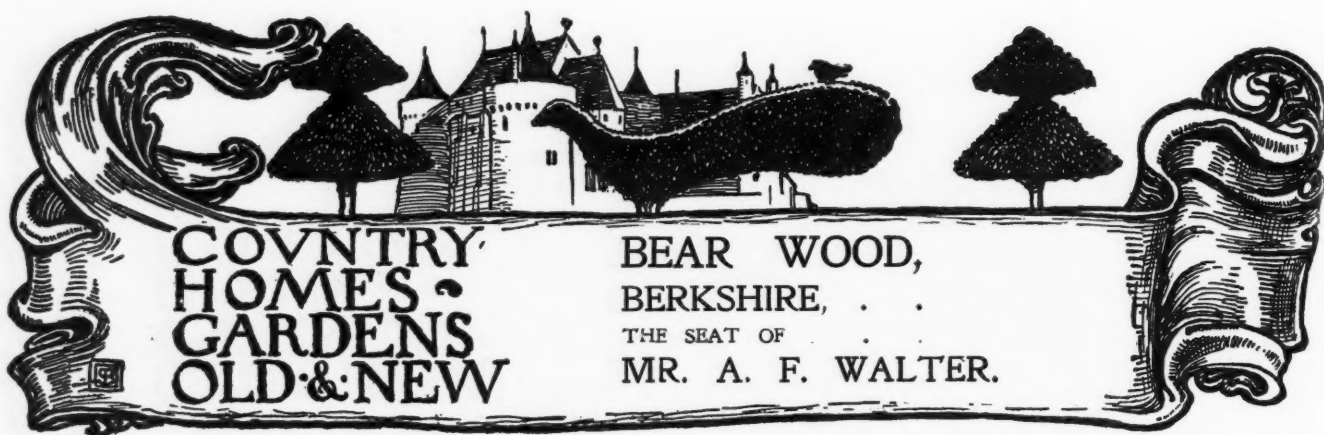
an' by th' time I got to th' carr I worn't belaavin' what some chaps say about a pipe o' bacca lein' as gude as a breakfast. Howsumdever, I crep round to th' side o' th' carr, got behind a bit o' reed what owd Jack hadn't cut, an' kep an eye on th' fleet. But though I lay there nigh two hours, an' th' cowl so got a-howd o' me I couldn't fale my hands or fate, I see'd northin' more like a gret white harnsee than an' owd Kentishman (hooded crow) what come a-floppin' over th' river an' got to scorf'n up some rubbidge what wor drawn out o' th' fleet. That owd warmist so riled me that I wor in a mind to let go at 'un; but I thowt better on it, an' kep still."

"About eleven o'clock whu should come marnderin' round th' carr but owd Jack, jist out o' bed, an' come, as he said, to see what sort o' mornin' it wor. As sune as he see me he say, 'Why, Zack, bor, what th' dowse are yow a-duin' here? Havin' a luke for th' white harn-ee?' 'Tha's as it may be,' says I. 'Well,' says he, 'I wish yer luck; I ha' bin a-lukin' for that other bad ever since I got th' lust un, but I aint sin it since yesterday mornin', an' I reckon it's tuke itself orf to Breydon. Anyhow, Jimmy Snowdon towed me as how he seed a big white bad what he tuke to be a spunebill a-feeding' on one o' th' flats. But like enow it 'ull come back here some time. It ha' bin a-hangin' about here some days."

"Well, all that mornin' I marndered about th' mashes an' along th' walls, but all I got wor a poker (pochard) agin Reedmere Fleet. About tree o'clock I tained into th' Ferry an' got a pint o' beer an' a bit o' brid an' chaze. While I wor there young Budd, what I'd sin th' night afore, come in, an' seein' me he say, 'That owd harnsee's back agin. I see it a-flyin' towards Alder Carr Fleet not an hour ago.' At that I drank orf my beer an' set out along th' river-wall as quick as I could put foot to th' ground; but it wor nigh shuttin'-in-time (dusk) afore I got to th' fleet. Howsumdever, I crep along th' side o' th' carr till I got to th' reed what I'd hid behind in th' mornin', an' then I cast an eye along th' fleet. What I seed set my heart a-jumpin', I can tell ye. For not fifty yards from where I wor hidden there wor th' gret white harnsee a-standin', wi' his neck reined out, aside o' th' water. It wor nearly dark, but th' frost had melted a bit durin' th' day, an' I could see th' bad right plain. To make sure on it, I crep along under cover o' th' reed till I got to th' ligger (plank foot-bridge) what led on to owd Jack's mash. Then I let go at un, an' th' bad dropped down into th' fleet. As sune as I got it out, I set out for Reedmere Station, for, thinks I, I'll catch th' six-thatty train to Norwich. At th' Ferry I borrow'd a bag orf th' landlady, tellin' her I'd got a bad what I didn't want to sile, an' by seven o'clock I wor at Norwich."

"It worn't long afore I found up th' man what had bowt owd Jack's bad. He wor givin' a kind o' party at his house, but as sune as he heerd there wor a Reedmere man a-wantin' to see him, he come a-hurryin' out, an' fixed his eyes on my lag. 'Well, Zack,' he say; 'what ha' yow got there?' 'A gret white harnsee,' I say, a-chuckin' a bit o' a chist. 'What, another one!' he say, a-goin' for th' bag. 'That I hev', as you can see for yarsill,' says I. At that he pulled out th' bad, an' hild it up to a lamp what wor a-hangin' nigh th' door. Then he loked at me kinder quare, an' say, 'Zack, this aint April Fule's Day.' 'What du yow mane?' says I. 'What du yow mane by bringin' me an' owd common harnsee darbed over wi' white paint?' says he. Then seein' how stammed I wor, he bust out a-larin', an' say, 'Somebody ha' bin hev'n' a joke wi' yow, Zack.' An' he kep on a-larin' fit to bust hisself."

"I heerd enow about it next day, yow can bet. Yer see, it wor all a put-up job atween owd Jack an' them chaps what I met at Reedmere Ferry. They'd got an owd winged harnsee what Jack had caught, an' darled it all over wi' white paint. WILLIAM A. DUTT.



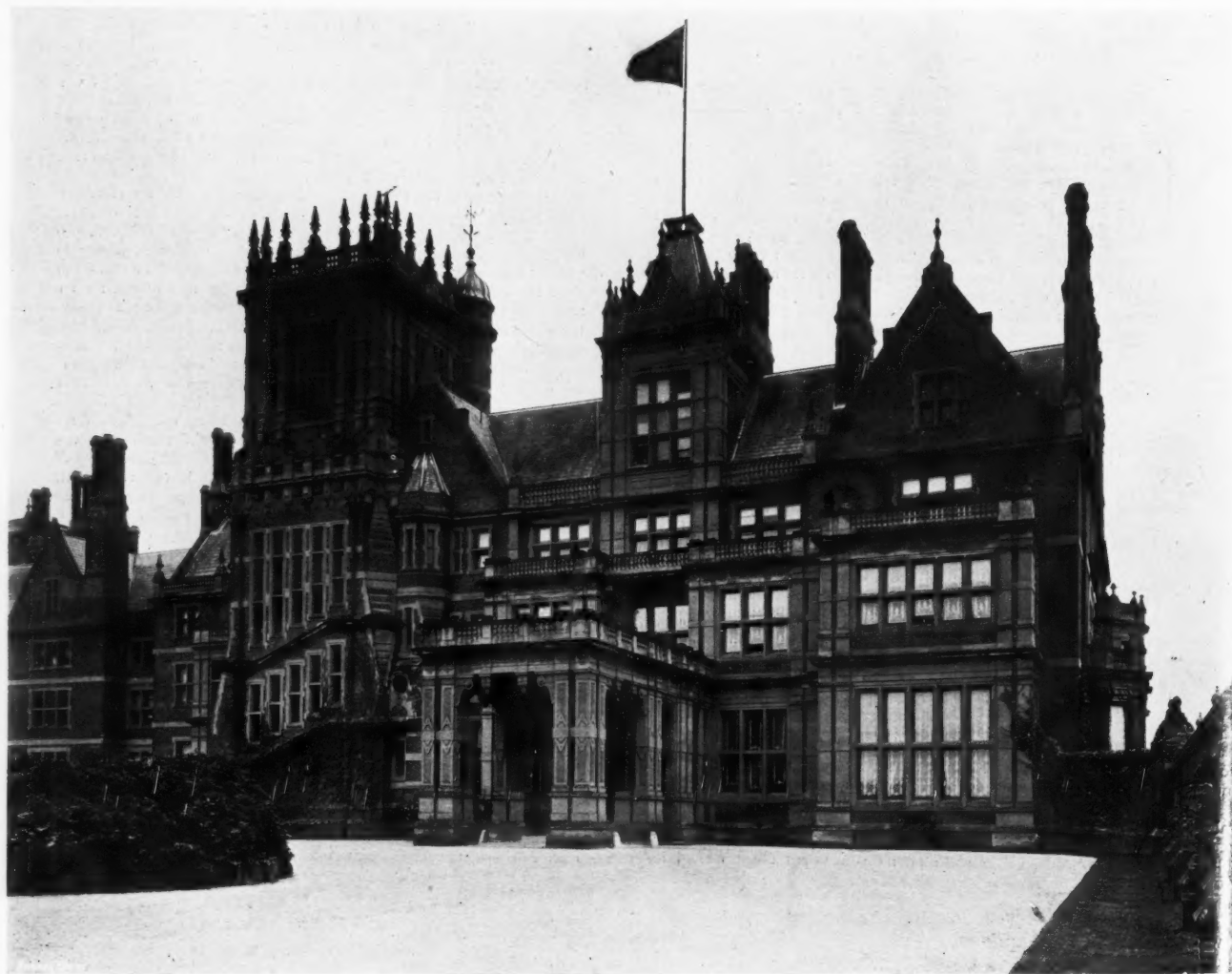
THE origin of the name Bear Wood is uncertain. It occurs in State Papers of Queen Elizabeth's time, where it is said that the Queen ordered oak from her "Woodes called Bearwood and Sonning Parkes in Berkshire." The name Bere is said to mean Beech in the old Saxon, and accordingly Bear Wood is supposed to mean Beech Wood. However this may be, the idea of the present owner is that Bear Wood, Barkham, and Berkshire are all attributable to the same root found in the word Barroc, all this part of the country between Silchester and Staines having at one time been a forest called Barroc Wood. This Barroc Wood will be found in a map in Green's "History of the English People."

With regard to the spelling of the name Bear Wood, it has been mentioned above that "Bearwood" occurs in State Documents of Queen Elizabeth's reign, but at the time that Mr. Walter bought the property it appears to have been written in two words, and was always so printed in the maps, and so written by him and the members of his family. It was subsequently changed into one word by his son about the year 1870, but the spelling has since been restored by the present Mr. Walter to the old form originally known to him and used in the documents relating to the property.

A hundred years ago, then, Bear Wood appears to have been a timber forest and nothing more; an outlying part of Windsor Forest; a district sparsely inhabited and rarely visited save by the Royal Hunt, or by the foresters of the Crown; a region of varied soil and mild climate, where oak and beech flourished luxuriantly, a paradise for rabbits, squirrels, and every kind of singing bird.

About the beginning of the last century this tract of land was bought from the Crown by Mr. John Walter (the proprietor of the *Times*, and grandfather of the present owner), who built himself a moderate-sized house in the Wyatt style, on the spot where the present one stands. The house stood on high ground, about two and a-half miles from Wokingham, and half a mile from the village of Sindlesham. The view to the north extended over the Thames far into Buckinghamshire, while on the south it was bounded by the ancient wood hard by. Here Mr. Walter spent his leisure moments till his death in 1847, when his eldest son succeeded to the property.

As time went on the property of Bear Wood received considerable additions, notably in the directions of Wokingham, Finchampstead, and Barkham, and eventually it became evident that the old house had served its time and ceased to be in





THOSE NOBLE STEPS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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harmony with its surroundings. Besides this, the accommodation it afforded was hardly sufficient for the inmates, and it afforded no proper resting-place at all for the fine collection of Dutch paintings on which the owner justly prided himself.

Accordingly, early in the sixties Mr. Walter decided to pull down the old house and to build a new one in its place. He employed Mr. Kerr as his architect, with Mr. S. Deacon as clerk of the works, and in 1864 began operations. It was not until four years afterwards that the work was sufficiently advanced to admit of occupation, and another six years more were required to carry it to completion. The style of the house may perhaps be described as late Tudor. The house is large and exceedingly well built in red brick and stone. The carpenters' and joiners' work and woodwork generally are as good as can be found anywhere in England, and it may safely be said that there is not a bad piece of work in the whole building. Mr. Walter was his own builder; the bricks used in the building were made on the estate, and the whole of the woodwork for the interior was turned out in the carpenters' shop across the lake. Mr. Walter's

hobby was building, and this hobby he pursued to the end of his life; and as the material as well as the workmanship for all



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PART OF THE SOUTH FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE SOUTH TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE LAKE FROM THE TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE LONG WALK FROM THE TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

his numerous undertakings was supplied by the Bear Wood estate, his brick-kilns and saw-mills never ceased working, and this sleepy corner of Berkshire began to wake up at last.

Let us now take a cursory glance at some of the rooms on the ground floor. On entering the front door beneath a massive stone portico we pass through a vestibule into the hall, where, if it is winter, we find a huge log fire blazing on the open hearth. The high oak wainscoting, bold red and gold leather wall-paper, and heavy draperies give it a most comfortable appearance, especially on those occasions when a warm welcome and tea are awaiting cold and hungry guests. A door on the right leads into the picture gallery, the central and principal room of the house, lit from the top by a double skylight. Around the walls hang a goodly array of Dutch and other pictures, chiefly collected by his ancestors, but including a few acquisitions of the present owner, among them a fine Greuze and a portrait of Mrs. Walter, by Benjamin-Constant. The easy style of the furniture, the grand piano with its pile of music, the newspapers and books scattered about, and the masses of flowers and ferns that fill every available corner, show at once that this is the most popular



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BEAR WOOD THROUGH A VISTA.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

and most frequented room in the house, in spite of the fact that it has two fireplaces and six large double doors. The two at the west end open respectively into the drawing-room and the ballroom, while the two opposite doors lead into a corridor through which one passes to reach the dining-room, billiard-room, and study. The whole of the east wing is taken up with kitchens, offices, and servants' bedrooms. The large tower on the north side is occupied by a

fine oak stairway of easy gradient, at the top of which runs the "Golden Gallery." Merely mentioning a cosy breakfast-room which looks on to the rose garden, we will retrace our steps through the picture gallery, leaving on our right the library, a large room draped with curious Moorish hangings brought from Tangier by Mrs. Walter, and passing out by a glass door between two carved figures in stone representing Night and Morning, we find ourselves on the terrace, and in full view of the beautiful lake, which lies fifty feet below us, surrounded on all sides by an undulating forest of beech trees. Through this broad glades have been cut to let in a little glimpse of the sunlight, and to remind the weary soul who wishes to escape from all this "splendid isolation"



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BY ROCK AND POOL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



BEAR WOOD FROM THE LAWN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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that along them it can wander unmolested, and be at rest.

There is nothing remarkable about the grounds. They were left in a very rough and unfinished state after the house was rebuilt, and consisted of narrow walks winding through uncouth masses of rhododendrons and a pretty rockery; but under the supervision of the present Mr. Walter the grounds are being remodelled, and a flower garden and new terraces are in process of construction, under conditions which, as the pictures plainly show, are of more than considerable natural advantage. Mention should be made also of the flight of steps leading up to the house, which in their noble breadth of stone are precisely what stone steps ought to be, but seldom are.

About five minutes' walk from the house is the church, a simple edifice, built by Mr. Walter's grandfather.

After the Thaw.

THE wind, which had set in steadily from the north-east for the last week or two, coming, said the old shepherd, "straight from the cold country," has changed at last. Across a sky of delicate pale blue light fleecy clouds are drifting, and the air is moist and balmy. Everywhere there is a sound of continual dripping, and the snow slips off in heavy masses from the



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ROCK AND WATER GARDENING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

which lie thickly; its ruddy colours on breast and back are scarcely distinguishable from them, but when it presently flies up it shows the black-barred blue in its wings and the patch of white over its tail. The tomits are flying from tree to tree, and the chaffinches are calling cheerfully. In the hedge a pair of hedge-sparrows are creeping about, like quiet little brown mice, amongst the bracken and the black-berry trails. Everywhere there is a lively twittering, as though the birds were rejoicing that for the present at least the hard times are over. K. H.

THE IMPORTED WEASEL IN . . . NEW ZEALAND.

SOME years ago, when the rabbit in New Zealand was a pest, and the idea of cold storing and exporting the creature had not yet been tried, the stock-owners of the islands hazarded the desperate expedient of importing the most bloodthirsty of all small carnivora, the weasel, and the stoat. Readers of local papers saw from time to time advertisements for live weasels. Notes appeared later commenting on the report that 2,000 had been collected and exported from Lincolnshire—a gross exaggeration no doubt. But the weasels did find their way across the globe, and arrived in excellent condition, and with appetites whetted by a sea voyage. When turned loose they found everything much to their liking. There was



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THE NEIGHBOURING CHURCH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

roofs and the branches of the trees. The grass is fast reappearing; it looks bright green against the snow which is left. In all the hollows there are pools of water standing, and now the ditches are full, and the little water-courses and brooks run strong. While the frost lasted, the children would hurry from school in the dark afternoons, when the sun had gone down like a crimson ball, and the evening star shone coldly bright, to take a slide down the long grey pond before they ran home over the crisp frozen snow. Now where the slide was, "floating double swan and shadow," are the swans again. They have had an unhappy time of it while they were frozen out, walking awkwardly about on the bank, where the hoof-marks of the cattle were frozen hard and jutting, with only one small space to drink from where the ice had been broken up. They look in their element once more now, as they float and turn with their slow, strong grace, bending their majestic necks and dipping their bills to the water as though they were admiring their own lovely reflections.

There is a total disappearance of the birds from round the houses and the stackyards; they have taken to the woods and fields again. Even the sparrows are gone far afield; and out on the grass where the snow has melted the black-birds and thrushes are running about in search of worms; and in the ploughed fields the rooks and starlings are busy. Up in the copse on the hill the sun is sending misty shafts of light through the bare purple branches of the beeches, lighting up the trunks of the trees, which are embossed with many a velvety patch of green moss or traced over with grey lichen.

A jay is turning over the wet dead leaves



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BEAR WOOD: FOXGLOVES IN THE ROCK GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

any quantity of rabbits, and, for a change, a number of native ground-living birds, either flightless or by preference using their legs rather than their wings. Besides this there was nothing to kill them—no foxes, which occasionally do kill a stoat or weasel, no large hawks or big owls. There was also in places a fine stock of pheasants, imported and acclimatised, and in some parts quail and colin.

These blood-thirsty and detestable little beasts soon began to increase and multiply. By a law of acclimatisation seen consistently in New Zealand, most wild animals which are imported there tend to become larger and more prolific. This holds good from the red deer to the rat and rabbit. The weasels were no exception. Part of a most interesting communication received from that distinguished naturalist, Mr. W. W. Smith of Ashburton, deals with the result of the establishment of these and other Mustelidæ in the fair fields and mountains of the colony. Both weasels and stoats grow to a larger size than in England. "Their muscular development is greater," he writes, "and their speed and size increased. Anyone who knows the astonishing strength and agility of these little beasts in proportion to their size can imagine how formidable an 'improved' variety would be to animal life. My fox-terrier lately caught a large male weasel in the river-bed here, fully one-third larger than any I have seen in the old country. A nest of stoats found in a wheat stack at Winchmore, near Ashburton, this season contained five young ones. The creatures have already cleared the district of native ground-birds, and are increasing rapidly. Several young lambs have also been found dead in some districts in the South Island. They showed punctures or small wounds



Copyright FERNERY IN THE GROUNDS AT BEAR WOOD. "COUNTRY LIFE."

behind the ears, which are unquestionably the work of weasels or stoats. Recently notices have appeared in the papers of domestic cats capturing them and bringing them home. I have seen their introduction into this country, which contains the most remarkable and interesting native fauna existing in the world, with sincere regret."

They are not only destroying the native birds, but also helping to kill off the once-flourishing pheasants and

the introduced partridge and quail. In this they are aided by the common practice of dropping poisoned wheat to kill the rabbits. Altogether it is a sad pity, for our New Zealand cousins had shown the greatest enterprise in introducing new animals, and met with singular success. The ferret is also established as a New Zealand wild animal now, and will probably be equally as destructive as the weasel, though the check inflicted by them on the rabbits is not what was expected. They were liberated fifteen years ago in rabbit-infested districts. Mr. Smith notes that they also are larger and stronger than their ancestors. A large male trapped on a farm near the ranges had a glossy black coat, and was extremely fierce, like a wild polecat. But fortunately ferrets have not increased in the wild state as have weasels. In some districts where they were liberated they have died out entirely. This was coincident with the disappearance of the rabbits, so it may be taken that the ferrets did aid in their extirpation.

The stocking and colonisation of Greater Britain with suitable animals, and the interchange of species between colonies and dominions, is a matter of great public concern. Perhaps it is as well to note where experiments have not answered, as well as those that have succeeded.

C. J. CORNISH.

ST. PATRICK AND HIS DAY.

IT is good to remember on St. Patrick's Day—that is to say, the Monday after publication of this number—that one of the last and most gracious acts of the late Queen Victoria was to issue permission to Irish soldiers to wear the shamrock on parade. Previously it had been against the regulations, and we were threatened with an annual squabble between discipline and patriotism. Never was cause of quarrel more tactfully removed, and the Queen set a fine example when, in this way, instead of discouraging she actually honoured the Irishman's love of his country. There was no reason in the

nature of things for associating evil with "the dear little, sweet little, shamrock of Ireland." Legend ascribes its institution as a national emblem to a pleasing incident in

the life of the shadowy saint. It is said that St. Patrick used to illustrate the doctrine of the Trinity by a reference to its three small leaves. How difficult it is to realise it now! Only 400 years had passed away since the Founder of Christianity had died, and in the British Islands a multitude of old religions still flourished, for the greaved warriors and sea pirates all worshipped something, even if their adoration took no more mystic form than



Mrs. Delves Broughton. ST. KEVIN'S CHURCH, GLENDALOUGH.

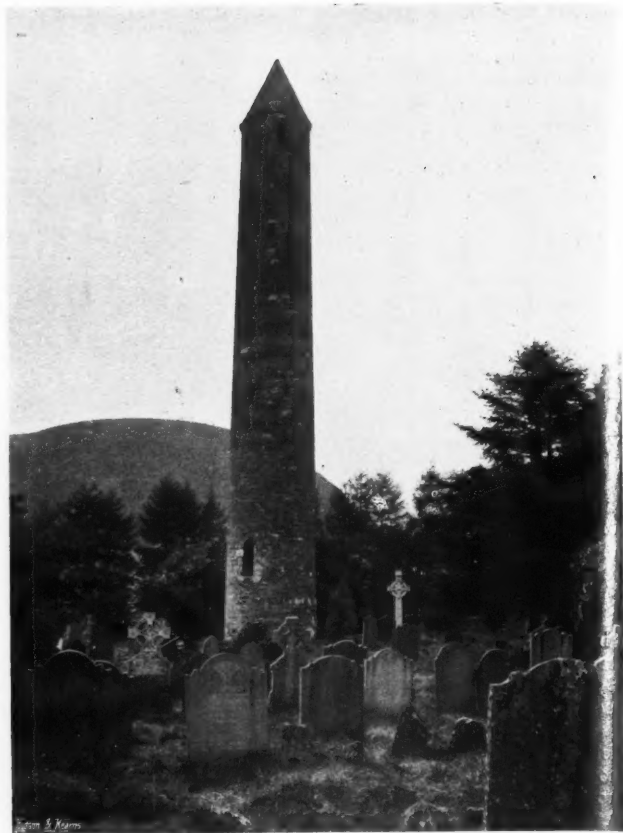
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that of drinking "skol!" from the skulls of the dead, and believing that there was a great Valhalla for the souls of men. This rude faith was enough to enrage them in the day of battle, for, like the Mahomedans, if they only died fighting they were sure of bliss. And now comes to them this saint and dreamer, like so many other saints and dreamers produced by Christianity. He had been born in the year 373, and had spent six years of his young life in slavery. It was no distinction of his to have fought by land or sea. But in his earliest days he was visited nightly by visions that did not call him forth to use his sword, but stimulated mind and soul, so that when he managed to escape and settle at Arles, in France, he learned Latin and tried to find out the truth about man and his destiny from books, and particularly the Bible. Yet it was borne in on him that



AN OLD IRISH CROSS.

it is not enough for man to be a mere recluse spending his days in study and worship. If he had found the truth it assuredly was his duty to disseminate it. Out of the gate of dreams there flew to him one with this message, which was the voice of the children of Ireland, and it said, "Come, holy youth, and henceforth dwell among us." Fain would his comrades have dissuaded him from this hazardous journey to the bare-legged kerns, but the simple early Christians, for all their gentleness, were as great as the Berserkers themselves in scorn of danger and fearlessness of death. They knew that there was little chance of attaining the glory of martyrdom with crowds looking on in admiration, part in hate and part in fear. Much more likely was it for the preacher's



A ROUND TOWER AT GLENDALOUGH.

tongue to be silenced by a sudden sword stab, or arrow, or blow from a club. But St. Patrick did not shrink from the ordeal. He went and taught the wild tribesmen that love and not war should be the ruling spirit, and that man's destiny was not to seize and enjoy, but to suffer and renounce. At least, we now see that to have been the essence of the matter, but the early missionaries really devoted much of their time and energy to the expounding of mystic points of doctrine such as the one we have adduced, three persons in one godhead like three leaves on a stem of shamrock.

It was soon proved that in the new doctrines there was something that appealed to the heart of man. The early Christians did not exactly uproot the old religions, but grafted their own upon them, as is proved, by dove-tailing their memorials upon those of the pagans. They did not go so far as to denounce the mythology they found as a mere invented fable, but rather tried to represent the ancient gods as evil spirits. In fact, in their

imagination, earth and air had an unseen as well as a visible population—hence the impressiveness of their figures of evil spirits. At first Irish worship was conducted in churches that were mere hovels, some rudely built of stone, others of clay and wattle. Even so they were not safe from assault. Here and there among the heathen were choice spirits, weary of endless war and rapine, who eagerly embraced the new tenets, but there were many others as zealously opposed to them. We may be sure, too, that there



Mrs. Delves Broughton.

ARCHED DOORWAY TO ANCIENT CHAPEL.

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were not wanting interested devotees of the old religions ready to stir the hearts of their supporters into rebellion. So it came to pass that hordes of heathen would occasionally descend on the new settlements eager to murder and destroy. The churches were not strong enough to afford protection, and it is supposed that the round or bell towers, so often found in their vicinity, were originally erected as places of refuge for the priests and missionaries. In confirmation of this, it has been noted that the doorways of these towers invariably faced the churches to which they belonged, except where the latter are of a later date. Thus on the appearance of marauders the ecclesiastics would hasten into their towers, just as, on the borders, when a foray was signalled, people and cattle were huddled into the keep.

The most distinctive sign of Christianity is the cross, and wherever the new proselytes went they erected crosses, where they are still to be found, in many a wild, unfrequented spot to remind us of days when the rites of our religion could only be performed by stealth. It was first but a rude and simple cross of stone, placed at the entrance of the church, but later all the resources of art were utilised to lend the cross, or rood as it was called, grace and dignity. The cross of Cong which we illustrate is a fine example of ancient metal-work. It was made in 1150, centuries after St. Patrick had gone to his rest, as a processional cross for the funeral of Meieredach O'Duffy. The inscriptions on the sides show that it was meant to enshrine portions of the true cross, for after commemorating the deaths of various kings and queens, there are some Latin words of which a translation is: "In this cross is preserved the cross on which the Founder of the World suffered." Some of its jewelled ornaments are gone, but those that remain, and the exquisite workmanship of the ground-work tracery, prove how skilled were the artificers of those early days even among the wild Irish. By that time the habit had grown of making pilgrimages to the Holy Sepulchre,



THE CROSS OF CONG.

and the more intelligent of the wanderers picked up on their journeys many artistic and beautiful ideas from the East, as may be seen from the famous Ruthven Cross and other memorials of early Christian art. The true Irish cross in form resembles the Greek cross, or rather it is a combination of the Latin and Greek crosses, its shaft being long and the arms projecting beyond a circle. In a way it may be said to symbolise the entire range of Irish ecclesiastical art. By the time that Cong was made Christianity

had greatly prevailed, though alongside of it heathenism flourished till very modern times. So once again in the world's history a dreamer prevailed over men of action, and from rude farm and stately church were raised the hymns and psalms taught so much earlier by the student and ex-slave who came from Arles. His influence extended far beyond the tight little island. Those small islets that fringe the north and western coasts of Scotland became homes of missionaries sent out by him. They had to say their orisons amid the squalling of sea-fowl, because only in retreats like those could they hope for peace. St. Kilda in the west and Lindisfarne in the east are typical centres of a movement that was due to the patron saint of Ireland, and St. Cuthbert must often have thought of him when feeding his "hens," the eider-duck on the Farnes, or when his orisons mingled with the noise of breakers from the North Sea. In a hymn that still finds place in Irish literature we may find some indication of the spirit that guided the first of Irish saints, to whom is due the consecration of the shamrock as a national emblem and many things that have been of equal importance in the history of that nation. It shows the simple living faith of those morning days of Christianity, before doubt in its modern form had been as much as dreamt of. It takes the form of a supplication for

"The power of God to guide me,
The wisdom of God to teach me,
The eye of God to watch over me,
The shield of God to defend me."

THINGS ABOUT OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD.

THERE are people who go to the Riviera in February, and other people who sit down firmly in dim town houses for the Parliamentary season. I spend most of the month in our potato-room. I do not pretend that this is entirely a matter of choice. When I began the garden I did not definitely envisage passing February in an acute potato fever—but that is what it has worked out to. The world in general looks upon the potato as a simple, harmless, necessary fact, which occurs by itself in a narrow variety of forms, boiled, fried in chips, sauté, in croquettes, Lyonnaise, robe de Chambre, straws, new, mashed, and again boiled. It is that way if, like the Countess, you buy them by the sack from somebody who does all the worry for you. She gets them from a man in Norfolk who has a potato-farm, prints a whole book of letters from customers with his photograph outside (she says she likes this, that it is nice to know how the man looks who grows your potatoes for you, and that this man has an honest, tuberous face), and sends her a religious Christmas card with nothing about potatoes on it—after all, they do not come into the Bible, of course, which is horticulturally rather weak—every season.

But if you grow your potatoes, if you take the whole potato responsibility of your family for a year, it means a very active and nervous February. That plain and homely plant has yet the bar sinister of the nightshade in its family, and I can truly say that by itself, on frosty nights, it poisons sleep. It demands such unbelievable conditions. It wants air, light, space, no frost, and no mice. Beyond everything, it wants light. I remember when the burden of the problem first bowed me, I went round our outhouses in a sort of despair; there was none that would suitably accommodate the seed-potato. I settled upon a dry and mouse-proof loft—but it was dark, or almost dark. I put in two windows, and straightway the frost flew at them, blackening the hopeful sprouts upon some favourite "British Queens." Then it was impossible to get the loft evenly lighted, and it seemed that the potatoes near the windows would always be risked. I arranged felt curtains to let down at nights—but what

about the day-frost, which two winters ago lasted three weeks? I had light straw laid over them during that period, but in the taking off the most advanced shoots were apt to be snapped or damaged.

The Admiral, who claims to be a practical man, suggested that we should throw out a cupola and use horn instead of glass, as horn was a bad—or is it a good?—conductor (I never can remember that—and Esmeralda is away). Apart from the expense of a cupola to the loft, which would certainly have lighted the potatoes nicely all round, I feel certain that horn cannot be purchased for filling-in frames with, and has not been purchaseable for about three hundred years or more. I gave up the cupola, and I never have believed that the Admiral really is a practical man since. The way he managed his sister's funeral is enough to prove it—but that demands too much time to tell now, and would only confuse my present issue, which is potatoes.

We have compromised with felt curtains and a lamp-stove when the day-frosts are bad, and I lay the floor first with peat-moss dust, and the early potatoes are stacked in their trays—Sutton's trays I have—one above the other, so that light and air penetrate. A tortoise-shell cat from Betty's stable staff prowls and yowls among them when there is any fear of mice, our mice not being trap-mice, which represent, in my opinion, an entirely separate and distinct breed.

Well, then there's the kind of potato. Some idiots fancy that one wants an early, a second-early, and a main-crop potato; that would be three kinds. That is all very well as far as it goes, but one wants a boiling, a frying, and a baking potato as well. For early potatoes we force Myatt's Ashleaf in pots in the vinery, and it does beautifully. I got the seed from a friend. I never think a round potato looks as "new" as a kidney; but that may be fancy. We also have Myatt's out of doors and School-master, and they seem to come about together. For the main crop variety my ambition is to have a large flowery baking potato which shall be pebble-shaped and white in colour—and I have it. We call it the Scotch potato, because a friend, who did

not know its name, sent it from Scotland. British Queen is a nice medium-sized potato, which has an all-round reputation and can do almost anything with a Cook, but, again, British Queen is not perfection.

Father likes a boiled potato to have "a bone in it." I like it to be yellow in colour and not white, and Esmeralda firmly demands that it shall "taste of potato." Also, we all like it to be of a size that need never be cut for cooking. My dream is to have no vegetable, of the root variety, cut at all, and it is a dream I have realised—with enormous difficulty.

To get a potato that tastes of potato has, however, been the greatest difficulty of all. I had everybody's catalogue, and they all said that their potatoes were white and large and "mild." Now, to taste of potato, a potato must be yellow, and of course, as I say, for boiling, never large. I corresponded freely with potato specialists, and I tried a great many things, and then I learned that the "fluke" variety of potato was probably what I wanted. "Flukes" poured in upon us. We had them from the Channel Islands; we had them from the red sand of the West Country; we had them from Ireland. The potatoes I saw at shows were always wrong (from my point of view), and I went on for weeks trying potatoes in order to get one that had a potato flavour. The growers assured me that my taste was entirely unfashionable; that everybody insisted on a white and "mild" potato. Still I persevered. It occurred to me that the potato was probably ruined in the kitchen and had the taste boiled out of it and poured down the sink. This led me to invest in a thing called a "Duplex Boilurette," made by one Wellbank. I came upon it quite accidentally, for of course I had been through every kind of steamer and double saucepan that is made long before; I had even had potatoes served with a strong taste of soda and "best Household Primrose Soap" owing to Cook reverting to the folded napkin plan to absorb the steam after they were cooked and drained. The Boilurette, which is one of those clever things that nearly everybody is against in England, actually cooked the potatoes with only half a teacupful of water, and has entirely reformed my ideas on potato cookery. We tidied over the period of Cook's prejudice and lunched and dined out as much as possible until it died a natural death, and now she is enthusiastic, and the potatoes for the Servants' Hall are likewise prepared in it. I gave Bingle one as a Christmas present, saying he would not recognise his Beauty of Hebrons and White Roses when they were done in it; but his wife thought it so handsome that she keeps it burnished in the centre of the mantelpiece in the sitting-room they never use. I ought to have known that would happen!

As to the variety I now favour, it is a yellow fluke and called, locally, "Stilese"—a gamekeeper called Stiles brought half a bushel to the village about ten years ago. He came from the West Riding. To describe it, I can only say that it is none of the things the catalogue potatoes are, except a heavy cropper. It has a deep eye; is even below medium size; a short pebble in shape; yellow and coarse-fleshed; and cooks very solid, breaking only a little into a curving spindrift on the sharper edges of where the knife has made ridges. It is, in fact, all wrong—and the only potato we like! Bingle had a prize with Magnum Bonums, with British Queens, and with White Roses—but Stilese we retain in the chaste obscurity of the scullery; no judge would look at it.

Just a word about our land as regards growing potatoes.

It is very unsuitable. We never did well anywhere in the garden till this last year, as I shall presently tell. That piece of ground I call "the allotment," which has a clay subsoil, and is excellent for many things, never suited potatoes. A top field which has chalk below it was an improvement, and we stick to that now, cutting it in two halves and taking barley always alternately, for which we manure well with natural manure. The potatoes go into the ploughed-in stubble and get nitrate to encourage them, and it answers as well as anything will answer for potatoes in our neighbourhood.

I alluded long ago to having dug potatoes in the open in the second week of June; in our late county that is a record, and here is how it was done. When enlarging the garden I had some old pasture to deal with. It was not trenched or even turned in when it should have been. Last February it had a remarkably green head of grass upon it—and I wanted it taken in before summer. In defiance of everybody, I adopted the "Laz Bed" system common to Irish bogs. A strip of turf, one spad wide, was cut off and laid aside; the tight pack of soil below it was loosened and stirred with a fork, and the largest flints were taken out—flints are really the natural crop with us flints and "charlock," or wild mustard, in strict rotation; a little good manure was laid on this stirred soil and the neighbouring grass spit turned over on to it, grass-side down. The biggest weed roots were taken out of this, dandelions and any docks and thistles, but nothing further. So on, row after row, until several roods were taken in. It was tough work. Then in March (we had been lucky in getting some nice frosts before) the potatoes were dibbled in, about fourteen inches apart in the rows, and the rows themselves were twenty inches apart. The ground sloped beautifully to the south. We hoed freely in dry weather (what it has cost me to teach Bingle to hoe in dry weather!) with a Canterbury hoe, and hilled-up later with a plain hoe—and not a potato failed; and it was here that we dug in the second week in June, and could have done so (I should not be human did I not add) a week earlier, at least.

That ground is being trenched this winter, and will carry peas and tomatoes and spinach this summer. It has been a perfect success, though the accumulated prophecy of failure ought to have

nipped every single plant and paralysed the very cockchafer grub where he lay curled, like a hare in his form.



Miss Alice Hughes,

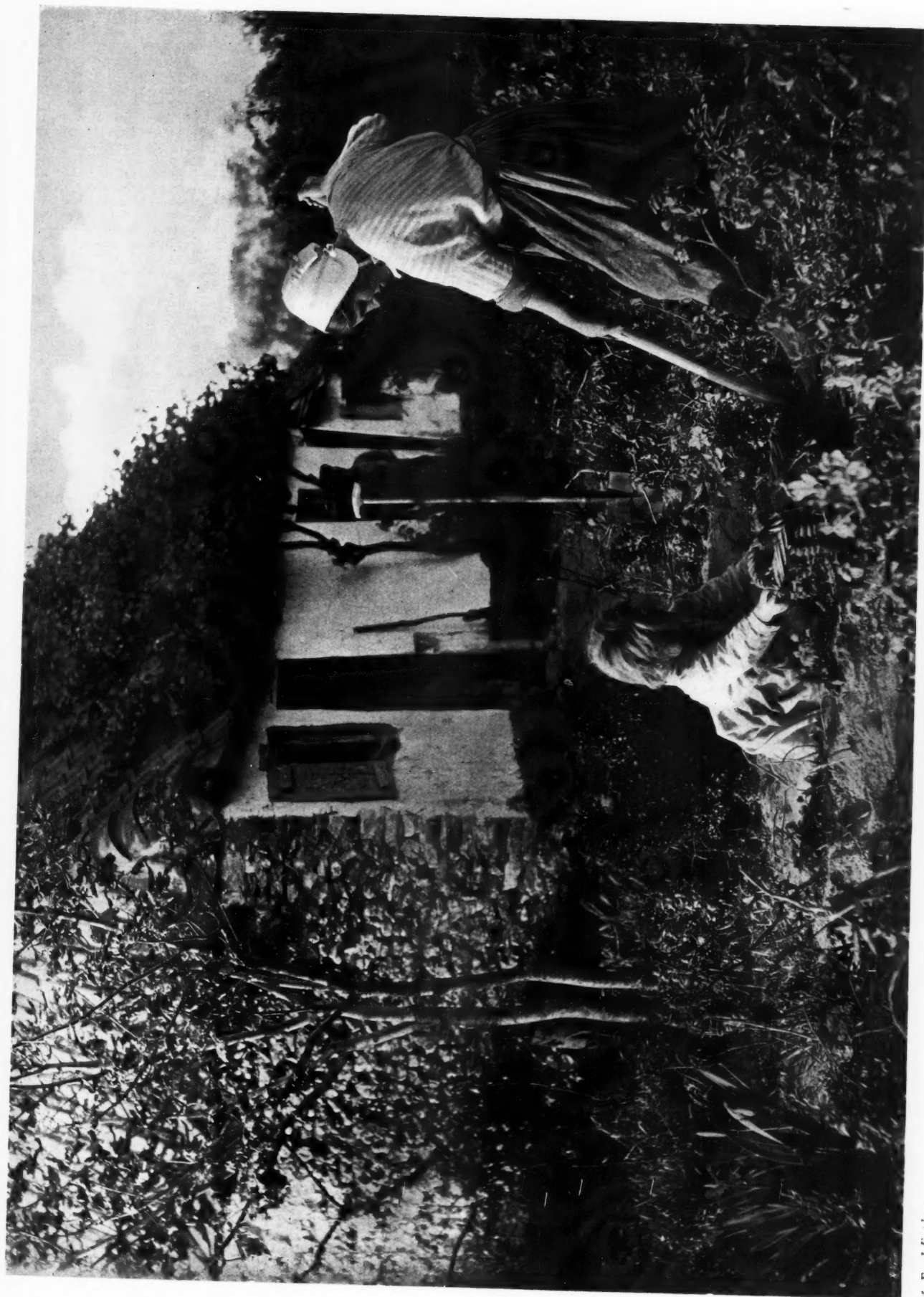
MRS. RUPERT BECKETT AND LITTLE GIRL

52, Gower Street.

BOOKS OF THE DAY.

IN the brief notes which follow this article will be found a few remarks upon Mr. E. F. Benson's new book "Scarlet and Hyssop." It is in every respect a very striking contrast to the admirable novel which I am about to describe, viz., *Audrey*, by Miss Mary Johnston, and published by Messrs. Constable. To read the books in conjunction is in itself a fine lesson in literary criticism, and may be recommended as an exceedingly amusing exercise. But a short analysis of the one we prefer will let this be more plainly seen.

In *Audrey*, to be candid without exaggeration, we have nearly all that goes to make a perfect novel, added to numerous coloured illustrations, which, as I hinted a week ago, are of real help to



M. Emil Frechen.

HELPING MOTHER.

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the reader in realising a vivid and a strong story. You meet Audrey herself on the title-page, a maiden of striking beauty, fearing that the half-breed trader Hugon may be invading her in her woodland solitude and helplessness to press his unwelcome suit.

"It was pleasant in the forest. She watched the flash of a bird, as blue as the sky, from limb to limb; she listened to the elfin waterfall; she drew herself with hand and arm across the leaves to the edge of the pale brown ring, plucked a honeysuckle bough and brought it back to the silver column of the beech; and lastly, glancing up from the rosy sprig within her hand, she saw a man coming toward her, down the path that she had thought hidden, holding his arm before him for shield against brier and branch, and looking curiously about him as for a thing which he had come out to seek.

"In the moment in which she sprang to her feet she saw that it was not Hugon, and her heart grew calm again. In her torn gown, with her brown hair loosed from its fastenings, and falling over her shoulders in heavy waves, whose crests caught the sunlight, she stood against the tree beneath which she had lain, gazed with wide-open eyes at the intruder, and guessed from his fine coat and the sparkling toy looping his hat that he was a gentleman. She knew gentlemen when she saw them; on a time one had cursed her for scurrying like a partridge across the road before his horse, making the beast come nigh to unseating him; another, coming upon her and the Widow Constance's Barbara gathering fagots in the November woods, had tossed to each a sixpence; a third, on vestry business with the minister, had touched her beneath the chin, and sworn that as she were not so brown she were fair; a fourth, lying hidden upon the bank of the creek, had caught her boat head as she pushed it into the reeds, and had tried to kiss her. They had certain ways, had gentlemen, but she knew no great harm of them. There was one, now—but he would be like a prince. When at eventide the sky was piled with pale towering clouds, and she looked, as she often looked, down the river, toward the bay and the sea beyond, she always saw this prince that she had woven—warp of memory, woof of dreams—stand erect in the pearly light. There was a gentleman indeed!

"As to the possessor of the title now slowly and steadily making his way toward her she was in a mere state of wonder. It was not possible that he had lost his way; but if so, she was sorry that, in losing it, he had found the slender zigzag of her path. A trustful child—save where Hugon was concerned—she was not in the least afraid, and being of a friendly mind looked at the approaching figure with shy kindness, and thought that he must have come from a distant part of the country. She thought that had she ever seen him before she would have remembered it."

This Audrey and this gentleman, indeed, whose name was Haward, had met before. He had been one of an expeditionary party in the days of old Virginia, which had halted in a clearing on the slopes of the mountains where a pioneer and his little family were struggling with Nature; and he had been taken captive at once by the sweetness of her elder sister. The expedition had proceeded, and he with it, but after a while he had pretended to injure his ankle in a fall from his horse and had returned to the clearing, accompanied by his negro servant. Returning, he had found the cabin blazing and all its inmates murdered by Indians, save only the little child Audrey. Her he had taken home to his great plantation, and had committed to the care of the bibulous clergyman and his wife while he spent years of fashionable life in England. And now, having come back to his estate and his people, he found her again.

Is it necessary to say that between the great man and the woodland maiden there rose a great passion of love which ran by no means smoothly? How that love arose; how Haward broke off relations with the great Lady Evelyn, who loved him, but had refused him once, because she knew that he did not really love; how Haward found that Audrey had educated herself somewhat amidst the clergyman's books; how he treated her tenderly and dressed her in fine clothes; and how Evelyn scorned her at His Excellency's ball, Miss Johnston tells with surpassing skill. Moreover, she does it in the true spirit of the artist, not labelling her characters as clever or quick in repartee, but painting each of them with exact and minute care and letting them say clever things; and that makes all the difference in the world.

The most beautiful scene of all is that in the Governor's ballroom, when Audrey, having been scorned by Evelyn, is presented to the Governor:

"'Mistress Audrey?' said the Governor graciously, as the lady in damask rose from her curtsy. 'Mistress Audrey whom? Mr. Haward, you gave me not the name of the stock that hath flowered in so beauteous a bloom.'

"'Why, sir, the bloom is all in all,' answered Haward. 'What root it springs from matters not. I trust that your Excellency is in good health—that you feel no touch of our seasoning fever?'

"'I asked the lady's name, sir,' said the Governor pointedly. He was standing in the midst of a knot of gentlemen, members of the Council and officers of the colony. All around the long room, seated in chairs arched against the walls, or gathered in laughing groups, or moving about with a rustle and gleam of silk, were the Virginians his guests. From the gallery, where were bestowed the musicians out of three parishes, floated the pensive strains of a minuet, and in the centre of the polished floor, under the eyes of the company, several couples moved and postured through that stately dance.

"'The lady is my ward,' said Haward, lightly. 'I call her Audrey. Child, tell His Excellency your other name.'

"If he thought at all, he thought that she could do it. But such an estray, such a piece of flotsam, was Audrey, that she could not help him out. 'They call me Darden's Audrey,' she explained to the Governor. 'If I ever heard my father's name, I have forgotten it.'

"Her voice, though low, reached all those who had ceased from their own concerns to stare at this strange guest, this dark-eyed, shrinking beauty, so radiantly attired. The whisper had preceded her from the hall; there had been fluttering and comment enough as, under the fire of all those eyes, she

had passed with Haward to where stood the Governor receiving his guests. But the whisper had not reached His Excellency's ears. In London he had been slightly acquainted with Mr. Marmaduke Haward, and now knew him for a member of his Council, and a gentleman of much consequence in that Virginia which he had come to rule. Moreover, he had that very morning granted a favour to Mr. Haward, and by reason thereof was inclined to think amiably of the gentleman. Of the piece of dark loveliness whom the Virginian had brought forward to present, who could think otherwise? But His Excellency was a formal man, punctilious, and cautious of his state. The bow with which he received the strange lady's curtsy had been profound; in speaking to her he had made his tones honey sweet, while his compliment quite capped the one just paid to Mistress Evelyn Byrd. And now it would appear that the lady had no name! Nay, from the looks that were being exchanged, and from the tittering that had risen among the younger of his guests, there must be more amiss than that! His Excellency frowned, drew himself up, and turned what was meant to be a searching and terrible eye upon the recreant in white satin. Audrey caught the look, for which Haward cared no whit. Oh, she knew that she had no business there—she that only the other day had gone barefoot on Darden's errands, had been kept waiting in hall or kitchen of these people's houses! She knew that, for all her silken gown, she had no place among them; but she thought that they were not kind to stare and whisper and laugh, shaming her before one another and before him. Her heart swelled; to the dreamy misery of the day and evening was added a passionate sense of hurt and wrong and injustice. Her pride awoke, and in a moment taught her many things, though among them was no distrust of him. Brought to bay, she put out her hand and found a gate, pushed it open, and entered upon her heritage of art.

"The change was so sudden that those who had stared at her sourly or scornfully, or with malicious amusement, or some stirrings of pity, drew their breath and gave ground a little. Where was the shrinking, frightened, unbidden guest of a moment before, with downcast eyes and burning cheeks? Here was a proud and easy and radiant lady, with witching eyes and a wonderful smile. 'I am only Audrey, your Excellency,' she said, and curtsied as she spoke. 'My other name lies buried in a valley amongst far-off mountains.' She slightly turned, and addressed herself to a portly, velvet-clad gentleman, of a very authoritative air, who, arriving late, had just shouldered himself into the group about His Excellency. 'By token,' she smiled, 'of a gold moldore that was paid for a loaf of bread.'

"The new Governor appealed to his predecessor. 'What is this, Colonel Spotswood, what is this?' he demanded, somewhat testily, of the open-mouthed gentleman in velvet.

"'Odso!' cried the latter. 'Tis the little maid of the sugar tree! Marmaduke Haward's brown elf grown into the queen of all the fairies!' Crossing to Audrey he took her by the hand. 'My dear child,' he said, with a benevolence that sat well upon him, 'I always meant to keep an eye upon thee, to see that Mr. Haward did by thee all that he swore he would do. But at first there were cares of State, and now for five years I have lived at Germanna, half-way to thy mountains, where echoes from the world seldom reach me. Permit me, my dear.' With a somewhat cumbersome gallantry, the innocent gentleman, who had just come to town, and knew not the gossip thereof, bent and kissed her upon the cheek.

"Audrey curtsied with a bright face to her old acquaintance of the valley and the long road thence to the settled country. 'I have been cared for, sir,' she said. 'You see that I am happy.'

"She turned to Haward, and he drew her hand within his arm. 'Aye, child,' he said. 'We are keeping others of the company from their duty to His Excellency. Besides, the minuet invites. I do not think I have heard music so sweet before to-night. Your Excellency's most obedient servant! Gentlemen, allow us to pass.' The crowd opened before them, and they found themselves in the centre of the room. Two couples were walking a minuet; when they were joined by this dazzling third, the ladies bridled, bit their lips, and shot Parthian glances."

No words of mine could give so completely as does this passage the picture of the scene or an idea of how really beautifully Miss Johnston writes.

The pity of it is, from the human, not from the artistic, point of view, that Miss Johnston has not permitted Audrey and Haward to live out their lives in happiness. In the great scene her talent as an actress, as has been seen, was revealed, and in the final chapter she determines to act for the last time in the theatre, having pledged herself to Haward at last. Would that there were space for the description of that scene in "Tamerlane," when, as Arpasia, Audrey held the whole of that brilliant audience spellbound. It is wonderful, fascinating in the extreme, and then, even as she finishes, her eye detects the half-breed Hugon, rising, dagger in hand, to assassinate Haward, and she steps down among the audience to denounce him and to receive in her own heart the weapon intended for her lover. Here the very deepest note of tragedy is reached; here art triumphs and the reader's eyes grow wet; but, oh, the pity of it! CYGNUS.

"SCARLET AND HYSSOP," by E. F. Benson (Heinemann), is one of those books which leave a bad taste in the mouth of him who has been reading so pure and delightful a book as that of Miss Johnston. Mr. Benson's puppets are smart, painfully smart, in point of station. Outside a penny novelette or a Disraelian novel I don't think I have ever met so many "titled persons" between the covers of any book save a peerage. They are also addicted to Bridge and, most of them, to more or less open immorality. That, one supposes, is meant for satire on aristocratic society. Finally, they are ticked as smart intellectually. They are continually straining after epigrams, and continually failing in the effort. Here is an example of my meaning, illustrated by the really very stupid character Arthur Naseby:

"To-night there was only a very small party, all the members of which, with the exception of Jim Spencer, had probably met five or six times a week since they came up to London, and during the winter had been together more often than not in each others' houses. There was, therefore, no sort of and resorting of groups required; conversation could either be general, or, in a single moment, split up like broken quicksilver and roll away into appropriate

corners. For the moment it was general, or rather everybody was listening to Arthur Naseby, a stout young man, fresh-faced, but prematurely bald, who, standing on the hearthrug, harangued the room in a loud and strident baritone.

"The most awful party I ever was at," he was saying. "Mrs. Boneman was there, the wife of our eminent artist, wearing a sort of bird's-nest on her head with three Union Jacks and some Easter eggs stuck into it. She was dressed in a sort of Brussels carpet, trimmed with what looked like horsehair. I'm sure it was not horsehair really, but probably some rare and precious material, but it looked like it; and she wore what I understood to be the famous Yeere diamonds. They were about as large as penwipers, and were plastered round her neck and pinned on to the shoulders; others were scattered about her back. I imagine she stood in the middle of the room, and her maid threw them at her, and they stuck in the horsehair."

"Mrs. Brereton shrieked with laughter.

"You are too heavenly!" she cried. "Go on, Arthur. Who else was there?"

"All the people whom one always sees coming out of the door of the Cecil in Brighton, and all those who ask one to supper at the Carlton, in order to acquire apparently who is sitting at the other tables. It is a sort of passion with a certain kind of person to know who is supping at the other tables at the Carlton, and his, or usually her, limitation that he never does. It appears to them of far greater importance than who is supping at their own. Well, they were all there, the Princess Demirep, and the Linoleums and Lincrustas. Hosts of them! I assume it was most brilliant.

"Whom did you go with?" asked Lady Davies, who always wore an air of intent study when Arthur Naseby was talking, because she was trying to remember all he said in order to repeat it as original."

"Nearly all of the book consists of conversations, very few of which are relieved by real wit, in nearly all of which labour is obvious. I have written with some severity, departing from my usual custom, because it is the just penalty for the tone of cynical superiority which runs through the book, making it not merely unwholesome, but also dull.

High Treason (John Murray, 6s.) is an anonymous novel of considerable interest. The tale is placed in the days when it was still possible to take the Pretender, Charles Edward, seriously. A beautiful girl—and in the book she really is beautiful—does take him very seriously, and is really in danger of suffering for high treason. A young man of the highest principles falls in love with her, and for her sake gets into serious trouble. He harbours Charles Edward, and when he is in danger has to kill a man in order to secure his escape. He finds himself in prison on a charge of manslaughter, and almost immediately is removed to the Tower on one of high treason. Things look black

enough, but the book is written with a proper sense of comedy, and one is never fearful of the event. A jury acquits him of the charge of manslaughter, and Pelham, who has reasons for not wanting further attention drawn to the affairs of the Stuarts, gets him married to the girl of his heart and sends them straight away to a delightful country house in Warwickshire. The story is well written, and the two leading characters are depicted with skill and charm. The novel is distinctly one to be read.

On the fashionable game of Bridge, now unquestionably among the indispensable accomplishments of a gentleman, or, for that matter, of a lady—all of Mr. Benson's titled persons play Bridge and scold one another unmercifully—Mr. Archibald Dunn, jun., writes a useful and clever booklet entitled *New Ideas on Bridge* (Walter Scott Publishing Company). Personally I am not more than a fair proficient—friends might deny even that—but I venture to say that my knowledge of the theory of the game and its chances is considerably greater now than it was before I had seen this book. The last word has not been said on some of the important and vexed questions raised in the book—that of a spade declaration by the dealer, for example. It probably will never be said; but Mr. Dunn's book, which, unlike a good many books about cards, is written with lucidity and simplicity, will be of great service to those of us who have, as he says, been staggering about blindly in an unknown land and groping for the road. A nice chapter might be added concerning "manners at Bridge," and Mr. Benson again—he is getting like King Charles's head to Mr. Dick—might be quoted as an example of what they ought not to be:

"You played that abominably, dear Mildred," said Lady Ardingly. "We should have saved it if you had had any sense. What does that make?"

"She pulled her cloak round her neck as Jack added it up.

"The night is growing a little chilly," she said.

"Mildred, who had been following the figures, looked up.

"The night?" she said. "Why, what is happening? It is day, is it not?"

"Very likely," said Lady Ardingly. "How much is it, Jack? Never mind; tell me to-morrow. I will pay you to-morrow."

"Jack rattled his pencil-case between his teeth.

"Thirty pounds exactly, Lady Ardingly," he said.

"They rose and walked across the lawn towards the house, Jack sauntering a little behind, his hands in his pockets, smiling to himself. Mildred dropped behind with him, the other two walking on a few paces ahead.

"The most odious hour in the twenty-four!" said Lady Ardingly, looking ghastly in the dawn.

"Very trying," said Andrew.

"But we have spent the night very well," said the other, as they parted at the foot of the stairs."

O'ER FIELD AND FURROW.

THE cold reception of the Bishop of Hereford's Bill in the House of Lords was to be expected. The Humanitarian League have partly to thank themselves for this. It was

so plainly the first step to a general assault on all sport, and particularly on hunting. This has been shown lately by the letters attacking the chase of the wild red deer on Exmoor, under the absurd heading of "Tame Deer Hunting." It seems to me that while the greater part of Englishmen are not only fond of sport for itself, but believe that to that fondness we owe some of the qualities that make for Empire, all such attempts at legislation are doomed to failure. It is not out of place to draw the attention of hunting men, while we are on this topic to a very sensible letter signed "Venator" which appeared in a morning paper last week. The subject was the presence of foot people, and I may add cyclists, at a fox-hunt. I live in a hunt where a good many foot people and cyclists join in the sport. One of the finest of hunting countries, its rolling contour gives a series of panoramas of the chase that cannot be surpassed. The coverts are few, well stocked, and well known, and a foot man or cyclist who knows the country can hardly fail to see something of the sport. I will not assert that they never spoil sport, but our Master and our resident members do not grudge them their pleasure. Visitors who come for a month or two and pay high prices for houses do grumble a little. We know, however, how much this popularity benefits the hunt. There are far more foxes and far less wire than in the territory of some of our neighbours. Some of our very best Masters try to show sport to the foot people, who seldom want to spoil sport, and who will generally do what they are told. Of course the habit of yelling at the top of their voice, whenever they see a fox is exasperating; but it is not only foot people who holla. There is another side to this, for perhaps a silent hunt would kill too many foxes, since no one thing saves more lives of hunted foxes, especially towards the end of a run, than hollaoing.

Everyone who has hunted for any length of time will acknowledge the truth of the saying that it is not the country that brings sport, but the hounds and the way they are handled. To this I would add that, if we regard hunting not only or chiefly from the riding point of view, in the wilder countries there are, as a rule, better foxes and more variety in the chase of them. There is, for example, no better riding country in the world than that part of the Quorn which we hunt over on a Friday or a Monday. The pastures are wide, the fences practicable, and a gallop, say, from Barkby Holt to Twyford or down the Hoby Vale is unsurpassed. Yet I should not like to assert that I had spent the best days of my hunting life there. The foxes are not good as a rule, and there is a certain sameness about the run of them. I have not the happy gift (from a fox-hunting point of view) of never knowing where I am. A famous horseman with the Quorn possessed it to a remarkable degree, for he jumped into the paddock of his own hunting-box at the close of a run, and eagerly enquired of the next comer



E. T. Sheaf.

THE MEET.

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where it was they had just killed their fox. In hunting I greatly enjoy variety, and for this reason I should put the Cottesmore run with the dog pack on Monday week from Castle Bytham very high indeed among the hunts of the week. There is a northern territory of the Cottesmore which is hunted on Mondays and Thursdays. It is bordered, and from a hunting point of view limited, by the fen country scarred with deep drains, impassable even by the boldest, the woods of Morkery are in one part of it, other parts are under plough, and there are some deep, well-cut ditches to divide the fields. At the meet were a few well-known Belvoir people—Mr. Tomlinson, Sir George Whichcote and his cousin, Lord Exeter and Lady Exeter. But though the field was not a small one, it was different from the Tuesday and Saturday crowds, for Castle Bytham is ten miles from Oakham, and on Mondays orthodox Meltonians hunt north of the Wreake. Indeed, there was at this very time a big field assembling at Widmerpool. Lawn Wood was speedily filled with the deep volume of sound which the Cottesmore dog pack are famous for. It was a traveller, no doubt, that they found, one who had come from the Grantham district of the Belvoir. He was an old fox, for he evidently knew much country. He was in hard condition too, for he beat hounds fairly at last, though it may be said with truth that for two hours they were never off his line. He had no doubt as to his point in the Belvoir country from the first, for he ran tolerably straight to the border. Hounds were hunting on at a good pace in that steady, businesslike manner which tells us that while there is no burning scent, yet hounds always know which way the fox has gone. At times they drove ahead at a fair pace, but that again may be put down to the "drive" which is the distinguishing quality of well-bred, well-hunted foxhounds. I say

well hunted, for a pottering huntsman can reduce a descendant of Belvoir Gamble to the veriest Towler that ever yowled for five minutes over a blade of grass. Well-bred these hounds are, and as they were running they had their heads pointed to the halls of their ancestors down by the lake under the Castle hill at Belvoir.

Thus they kept us galloping to the first decided turn. By this time some deep going, some big fence (taxing the horses' strength), and some ploughs had found out weak points in man and beast, and the field was growing smaller; then hounds swung to the right somewhere near Birchfield. We were now well in the Belvoir territory, but not in a part I know well. The Irnham woodlands held the pack for a time, while hounds were almost puzzled, it might be said for the first time, by the ways of their fox. I am of opinion there was no change here. We were soon clear of the wood among the strongly fenced ploughs and pastures of the Belvoir. Lenton Church tower was a landmark, and Lenton brook, swollen and turbid, an unwelcome obstacle in the way. Some there were who did not go further than this. And the end of it all was over a rabbit hole. Never mind, we were not sorry. Such foxes deserve to live, in spite of our humanitarian friends, who will insist that the whole pleasure of hunting is concentrated in those last few desperate moments when hounds are running for blood. And some foxes must be killed as a ransom for the race. One man boldly says it were better to exterminate the whole race than to hunt a few to death. Yet I appeal to those who have studied animal life with sympathy and knowledge as to whether they do not believe that for animals the joy of living does not in the long run far outweigh the pains of the hunted. But this is speculation, and I have much to tell. There was a fair field at the beginning—at the end not two dozen. What a contrast to Tuesday at Tilton! The same hounds, but what a crowd! Somebody said there were more than 600. I daresay, but at any rate it was altogether out of proportion. They came from Melton, from Oakham, from Leicester, from Market Harborough, and even (in a special) from Rugby. The fox or foxes considered the feelings of the graziers, who cannot like to see a regiment ride over so; py fields, for they clung to the woods. The crowd was huge, and I would rather hunt in Hampshire than in such a mob. A ten-mile ride out and home, and a new hat for nothing.

Travelling foxes were abroad that Monday, for I heard that Mr. Fernie's, drawing the Laughton Hills, hit on one. Running along the covert, he dropped down into the valley, and, crossing the canal, went back by way of Farndon Village to Waterloo Gorse. Three-quarters of an hour over some of the beautiful if rather severe Pytchley country; but Mr. Fernie's followers, when they jump at all, are used to big fences, and those who saw thoroughly enjoyed what was the best gallop from any part of the Monday country this season. On Thursday Mr. Fernie's hounds were at Stonton Wyville. The narrow lane, like the neck of a bottle, that leads to the little village was a continuous stream of horsemen and horsewomen, to say nothing of carts and foot people. It was a lovely day, warm, and springlike, and so apparently thought the fox, who was sunning himself outside Sheepthorns; trusting, it may be, that Stonton meant Stonton Wood or Glooston. Hounds were on his track in a moment, and bursting him along right over the steep rise to Earleton Clump, all grass, many white, well-hung gates, and some fences. They never left him till, fairly beaten, they caught him in an outbuilding near the village of Kibworth. This was merely preliminary. It was unquestionably a scenting day. Norton Gorse was the draw. The fox was not headed; perhaps he could not be, for there was a good scent, and hounds ran him so hard that he had to go right up to Galby. Then he swung round by way of Illston, but turning short back on the road, and the pack coming round quickly on the line, the field were fairly stopped. Everyone thought Sheepthorns was the point, while, in truth, hounds were running hard back over the fields towards Shetton, and keeping on the high ground at the back of Burton Overy. Something happened, which no one was near enough to see, to throw hounds off the line, and the fox is supposed to have crawled back into Norton Gorse, and made good his escape.

Whichever side of the river Wreake the followers of the Quorn



E. T. Sheaf.

THROUGH A GAP.

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were on on their day at Wanlip was the wrong one, for the fox dodged backwards and forwards over the river in a truly annoying fashion. Barkby Holt to ground near Gaddesly is a pleasant ride, but I hear the pace was just a good hunting one. There was a delay, which gave those left in Croxton brook a chance to come up. Hounds started close to the fox, and it was just a scurry at five-furlong pace through Ashby Pastures, into Thorpe Trussels, round and out again, back as he had come to Ashby. Always twisting and turning, but never able to shake off his pursuers, who at one time were in the same field, he was caught at last with a few to see the end. Once he lay down, and the pack fairly raced over him. Keyte got off his horse to break him up, but he was up again, and, slipping right through the astonished hounds, ran nearly to Melton. The Master, Mr. Foxhall Keene, Mr. Johnstone, and Mr. de Winton were among the very few who saw the exciting finish to a good run.

The death of Mr. Ernest Chaplin removes one who had once been a very well-known figure with the Quorn, of which he was secretary. For some time he has lived near Rugby, but most hunting men who are no more than middle-aged will recollect the Squire of Brooksby as a keen hunting man and a good farmer. The sudden death of Mr. Behrens removes a familiar figure from Cheshire hunting fields. There are a few more changes to record. Suffolk is to lose its Master, Mr. Eugene Wells; Mr. Philpot Williams, Master of Harriers and poet, is going to take one of the Hampshire packs. The partnership in that very pleasant county hunt, the South Staffordshire, ceases by the retirement of Sir Charles Forster; Mr. Forster will go on alone. It has been a week of hard work, good sport, and to my mind, on the whole, the most satisfactory of the season, so far.

X.

ON THE GREEN.

EVEN in France the building fiend seems specially attracted by golf links. The golf course of Biarritz has been a good deal changed, owing to his encroachments, from its condition of two years ago, when this scribbler last saw it. The charm has gone altogether—even that modified form of charm that replaced the more tremendous one of the original course—and gone, too, greatly to the satisfaction of the habitual "grouser," is one of those "grouse-moor" holes (and the "grousiest" of them). By compensation, instead of the old three holes on the lower ground below the cliff, called, with a savage irony, the *chambre d'amour*, there are now five holes in that lower region. The soil is sandy, there below; but is not a sandy soil one of the first essentials of excellence in a golf course? The lies sometimes are not good; but is not the golfer's career an illustration of the uses of adversity and of the faculty of making the best out of bad lies? On the whole, the green is not less good than it used to be, and in some ways is better, for some notable bits of injustice have been removed. The long shot comes over, not into the punch-bowl, for example, and Mr. Macfie's advice has been followed, and a strip of the bunker guarding the sixteenth hole has been turfed up, so that a player who drives as straight as Mr. Macfie can, runs up it. And if the men's course is as good as it was, the women's is a deal better. There is a hole over a pond, and other holes with all kinds of incidents, so that soon, if they are not careful, the women's course will be better than the men's, which never would do. But it all seems to mean that the golfing government is going in for a policy of territorial



E. T. Sheaf.

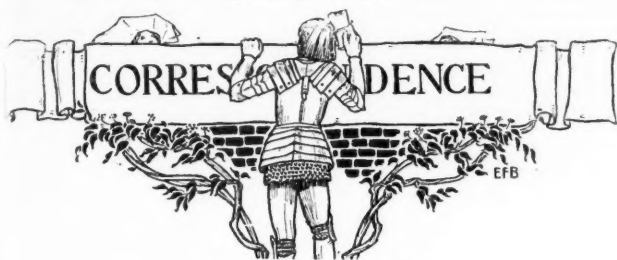
ACROSS THE FIELDS.

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aggravate disement at the eastward side to make up for the building fiend's bricks and mortar in the west, and the end of it ought to be a very good course, always remembering that it is inland and not seaside golf, so far as the character of soil goes.

I came to Biarritz proposing to take part in the annual foursome for Lord Kilmaine's cup (let it be said that it is a challenge cup, so that the suspicion of hunting the pot shall not arise). The microbe of influenza, however, disposed differently, and kept me in bed with only a Plutonic interest in the match. A similarly unsportsmanlike microbe also attacked Mr. Charles Hutchings, who was one of the Pau representatives, and he could not play. So Mr. J. Hornby played with Mr. E. Martin Smith for Biarritz, and Mr. W. Mure helped Mr. R. Maxwell along for Pau. Thus it was a Scotch and English, as well as a Pau and Biarritz, match. Quite a novel feature of these matches now (novel, that is, within the last two years) is the interest that the foreigners take in them—of course it is quite in accord with the pretty manners that make the English so popular on the Continent to speak of French people in France as foreigners. It is not to be said that the interest is completely an understanding interest. The questions that spectators are heard to ask disprove that. But it is a very friendly interest. And it is not much less than a triumph for the Englishman to succeed in arousing so much as this.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.



DESIGN FOR A HALL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE"]

SIR,—I have often come across designs for cottages in the pages of your most delightful paper, and as we purpose building a hall in our village here, I write to ask if any of your readers would be so kind as to give a design for one in COUNTRY LIFE. Although so far away from home, we are anxious to erect a building which will be thoroughly English in appearance; and, of course, out here the material would necessarily be of wood. The dimensions of the hall required would be about 60ft. by 30ft., with cloakrooms and smoking-rooms attached. Most of the "halls" out here are hideous, barn-like constructions, and my neighbours and myself are anxious that ours should be picturesque and an ornament to the village, instead of a blot on an otherwise beautiful landscape. Hoping that you will assist us in our endeavour to obtain a creditable building.—ROLAND STUART, Hatley Park, Esquimalt, British Columbia.

[We shall be glad to publish any really good design that our readers care to forward.—ED.]

PRESERVING CRUSTACEA.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE"]

SIR,—A year ago you were good enough to publish a letter from me recording the capture of a rare crustacean, the Painted Squat (*Galathea strigosa*), together with a photograph I took of it. I then mentioned that I was trying an experiment in preserving this specimen for the museum, with a special view of retaining its brilliant colours—bright scarlet and Cambridge blue. The squat was pickled for fourteen days in a mixture of formalin, boracic acid, glycerine, and water, the under-side being first pricked with a needle, so that the solution might get well into the flesh. During the fourteen days the solution was renewed three or four times. I called the other day at the Dover Museum, where the specimen was placed a year ago, and I am pleased to be able to report that the colours have faded little, if any, since the specimen was taken from the preservative solution (which it is only fair to say dimmed them somewhat, as compared with its live state), but after twelve months I can detect no further difference. The other specimen, which has been in the museum many years, had the whole of the fleshy part of the body removed, and the light has gone right through the shell and entirely bleached it (at least, that is how I explain the matter). Whether my specimen will retain its colour, and for how long, is, of course, a question time alone can answer; but as it has remained apparently unchanged for twelve months, I think I may say that the experiment was more than partially successful, and has proved that the method is superior to preservation in spirit, which dissolves the pigment of the shell, as witness the lobsters, etc., in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons. As I am aware that you, Sir, take a great interest in the preservation of natural history specimens, an interest which, judging from the letters I have received on the subject, is shared by many readers of COUNTRY LIFE who are personally unknown to me, I should be glad if you could spare a little of your valuable space to record the result of my experiment.—CHARLES HUSKEY.

THE BUILDING BYE-LAWS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE"]

SIR,—A few weeks or months ago you started, or allowed to be conducted, in your columns some interesting discussion on the Building Bye-laws. I should very much like to start a discussion which would lead, if anything could, to the recognition of some building principles, rather than laws, which ought, I maintain, to be the guide of every architect of a small house, but which such architects seem always to forget. The architect seems to begin by studying his proportions and how to fit in the rooms required into those proportions. I do not speak as an architect, but as one who has suffered a great deal from having to live in architects' houses built on this plan. The proposition, I maintain, that an architect of a small house ought to start with, is that his house is going to contain—is bound to contain—two chief demons, coming from the servants' quarters—the one demon and the worst being noise, and the second and the less, smell. The first problem of the architect should be to get the servants' regions—

kitchen, pantry, scullery, housemaid's cupboards, and so on—so disposed that the culinary smell and general noise shall pervade the house as little as possible. No doubt that can be done in a well-proportioned house as well as a badly proportioned, but I would beg young architects (although they always are the most inflexible) to realise that the reduction and subjugation of these demons is so much more important than the relative size of a table, that the latter does not matter at all in comparison. I should like to give a prize, or contribute to the giving of one (perhaps you, Sir, would take the matter up), for the best plan of a small house or, say, ten bedrooms, that tackled this problem in the best way. It would be doing an infinity of service to the great mass of people who live in small houses. Of course in a large house there is no excuse for servants' noise or culinary smell becoming obnoxious.—H.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE"]

SIR,—I greatly admire "Architect's" letter on the subject of the advisory rural bye-laws recently published by the Local Government Board. I think you ought to have added a postscript, "Provincial Press, please copy," for it deserves to be published far and wide. Unfortunately, there is no chance of any radical change, at least in our day, in the constitution and character of rural district councils. The shallow politician talks of "other men, other manners," and boasts of the wonder-working ballot-box, but the best you can expect from the elective process is a change of names without any appreciable alteration in the quality of councillors. Aspirants to power will promise anything to gain or keep a seat, and though there are, of course, honourable exceptions, the great mass who go in professedly to serve the public, merely serve themselves; high motives are rarely present. There are two great desiderata in the composition of a rural council. First of all a zealous, conscientious clerk, who loves his work and does it, and next in importance a capable chairman. Chairmen are very often mere "Justice Shallows," but even then, if a clerk has the respect of one or two sensible men on a council the chairman can do little harm. He follows the lead of the clerk with all the other nonentities. But it is a bad look-out when a district is cursed with a stagnant policy—I mean a policy of *l'oint de Zele!*—or an absolute indifference to wholesome reform. Many rural councillors are drawn from a class who have been the architects, so to speak, of their own fortunes, but don't care a fig for the fortunes, or the misfortunes, of the unfortunate parishes they are supposed to represent. The sons of these men succeed them in course of time—men who not only inherit the fortunes of their fathers, but also inherit and perpetuate their faults. George Herbert's advice is above the comprehension of the average rural councillor—

"The way to make thy son rich is to fill
His heart with wisdom, not his trunk with riches!"

(I slightly alter the words but not the sense of the couplet.) The fact is, the average rural councillor is incorrigible. The wisdom of the Local Government Board's new advisory rural code of Building Bye-laws is "too high" for them, just as Solomon accounts wisdom "too high" for a "certain class" who are devoid of every sensible aspiration! Nothing can be simpler and more satisfactory than the new rural code. It is wholly designed to secure sanitary country dwellings. The site is to be concreted, the walls have a damp-course, the drains, cesspools, and closets properly designed, the windows must have an area of one-tenth of the floor space, and nothing allowed externally to interfere with the circulation of air. These regulations, once widely adopted, should raise the standard of health, and rural health largely depends on the character of rural housing. Moreover, there can be no healthy educational reform unless we improve the housing of the rural labouring classes. Let the Local Government Board look at the question in that light. They already consider the health of the people too precious to be left to the tender mercies of rural or urban councils. The medical district officer is the servant of the Local Government Board, and therefore independent of the obstructive policy of Little Pedlington. If a district under the rural code eventually tends to become urban, then it can be easily placed under the urban regulations. The sooner Whitehall imposes its will on the rural councils by applying the rural code over all country districts, the sooner we shall get healthy reform in regard to the housing of our rural labourers. At the present moment the rural district council which rules in this part of the country not only refuses to adopt the new code, but has adopted an antagonistic policy fatal to all reforms, and I can prove it.—E. D. T.

[We sympathise very greatly with the woes of our correspondent, but can only urge him, in the words of a great politician, to agitate, agitate, agitate.—ED.]

WOODCOCK SHOOTING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE"]

SIR,—I have read with interest the article on "Woodcock Shooting" by your correspondent "Argus Olive," and have noticed also the letter from "Edmund Carlyn" relative to the shooting of two woodcock at one shot. I doubt very much that this occurrence is as rare as your correspondent would seem to imagine. Although my experience is confined to places where some thirty or forty woodcock shot in the day are regarded as rather exceptional, still I have seen the event in question take place, and I am sure that it must have happened more than once at some of the really big woodcock shoots. Some ten years ago, after we had finished the regular covert shooting for the season, I was out with my father's gamekeeper at Belanagare, County Roscommon, looking for stray cock pheasants, when two woodcock rose from the heather in front of the keeper, and he shot both of them with one shot. I believe I made a note of the fact in our game-book, but as I have not got the latter over here I cannot give the date.—DENIS O'CONNOR.

REMOVING LARGE TREES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE"]

SIR,—In answer to "A. A." I may say that it is quite possible to move large forest trees; it is only a question of trouble and expense. Whether the time and money will be well laid out will be a question for "A. A." to decide. The cost will be about £20 to £30 each tree. There are so many beautiful places in the market, as your advertisement columns testify, with gardens and grounds already matured, that a given result can be attained much more cheaply by purchase. But if "A. A." has a house to which he is attached, without fine

trees, and he is past youth, he cannot by planting English forest trees, oak, elm, beech, etc., see the result of his labours. With conifers he may. I will describe the process of moving. Suppose an elm 40ft. high is the subject. Mark out on the ground round it a square, 6ft. or more from the trunk each way, according to the height of the tree. Round this dig a trench as deep as the roots go, with perpendicular sides, cutting off the large roots that project. Then fill the trench with good soil and leave it for a year or two, till the severed roots have thrown out a crop of fibres. Then empty the trench again and place strong planks round the four faces of the ball, pass chains round, and screw them up tight. Then work under the ball, passing planks under till there is a complete floor. Pass chains under this floor and over the ball. The roots and earth are now in a box braced together. Have a pair of large wheels connected by an axle, the radius of the wheels being rather more than the distance from the centre of the trunk to the end of the ball. Fix to the centre of the axle a long pole. Bring the wheels close to the tree with the pole perpendicular. Lash the trunk to the pole, pull down the end, and the tree will be horizontal, with the ball lifted clear of the ground. In this position it can be wheeled anywhere. Have a hole ready in the destined place, lower the tree roots into it, unfasten and remove the planks, and fill in. The tree will want staying with ropes or wires till it is firmly rooted, and the branches may have to be shortened to keep a due proportion between them and the shortened roots.—HENRY WILSON, Farnborough, Kent.

DOGS OF IPSWICH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am always very interested in the novel photographs, etc., in the pages of your admirable paper, and thought perhaps you might find room for this dog photograph. These two dogs are very well known in the town of Ipswich, especially the terrier, as being the only dog attending the Council meetings, etc. I had wished for a long time to get a successful photograph of the pair, but never could get the terrier to face the camera. After many failures, I decided to appeal to his sporting instinct; but here again, as you see by the picture, I was doomed to disappointment, for upon shouting the word "Rats!" the Schipperke, who all along had seemed rather bored, could not resist a yawn. The one redeeming feature, to my mind, is, that it illustrates so well the varied natures of the two dogs, and you will notice that the terrier was in the very act of springing after an imaginary rat when I snapped him. I feel sure that the inclusion of the photograph would be a very pleasant surprise to many of your readers in that town, especially as I have kept this a secret through fear of disappointment.—OSCAR PAUL.

A DORSET COTTAGE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The picture on page 212, number 267, of COUNTRY LIFE reminds me of another keeper's cottage in picturesque Dorset, a photograph of which I enclose. Its interest—*en outre* its quaint porch and bridged water garden—consists in its being close to Stinsford House, once the home of Lady Susan O'Brien (the lifelong friend of Lady Sarah Lennox), and to Stinsford Church, which figures in so many of Mr. Thomas Hardy's novels.—R. OWEN.

SHEPHERDS AND SNOW-SHOES.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—In severe winters in England one frequently hears of "casualties" among sheep, and sometimes also among shepherds while trying to convey food to their starving charges through the drifts. Why, may I ask, do English shepherds not adopt some form of snow-shoe in such cases? Probably, English snow being somewhat moist and sticky, Canadian snow-shoes would be found best; but they do not glide so easily as Norwegian "ski," and with these latter the difficulty of progressing on sticky snow can be obviated by the application of a mixture sold here, composed chiefly, I believe, of stearine. If our shepherds took to snow-shoes, they could, without much difficulty, drag behind them a flat toboggan piled with fodder, and, moreover, could make three or four journeys in the time now occupied by one. The other day I was out on "ski," travelling easily over 5ft. or 6ft. of snow, followed by my dog, and then, for the first time, I realised how terribly handicapped man or beast can be in deep snow when unprovided with some special contrivance for travelling over the surface. The art of "ski-löbning" is soon acquired—at least sufficiently to enable one to go where one wishes without risk of being lost

in the snow-drifts—and I think the flock-owners of various districts should combine to encourage their shepherds to acquire the art. I might also point out that, in cases where trains are snowed up, snow-shoes would be of the greatest assistance in conveying food to the starving passengers.—SKI-LÖBER, Christiania.

[We thank our correspondent for his suggestion, which might have been usefully adopted during the recent storms, from which flockmasters and shepherds alike have suffered. But shepherds, as a class, have strong prejudices against methods not used by their forefathers, and we fear considerable difficulty will be found in inducing them to take up snow-shoes.—ED.]



HARD TIMES FOR THE BIRDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—While out rabbiting a few days ago, I noticed more birds lying dead than ever. I remember in severe winters before. Fieldfares appeared more numerous than any. I caught one before it was dead, and fed it, but it was famished too far to come round. I passed a redwing daily, within a couple of yards, turning the leaves over in a ditch, but it disappeared, starved out, no doubt. Mistletoe thrushes were feeding on holly berries within a few yards in the street. Haws were scarce this year—a great drawback in severe weather.—JAMES HIAM.

A BIRD-TABLE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Close to my study window there is a small iron stake with wooden cross-pieces tied on; to these are hung two cocoanuts, which should have holes cut on each side large enough for a tit to get in, the bone of a leg of mutton, a lump of lard, and a cage for nuts consisting of a flat board with three wire divisions, each holding a dozen nuts (this last was given me by a friend). Tits and robins soon come for the good food, and when the nuthatches discover the nuts they clear the board in an hour. These last are very pretty birds, which, as they keep in their trees, are not often seen. At the window they are quite tame, and, what I hardly expected, when they have done their serious business with the nuts, they often take a turn at bone, coconut, and lard. There is always something going on at the stake, so it is a pleasant object in winter. I can speak to it being an object of both interest and amusement to an old man.—GEORGE F. WILSON, Heatherbank, Weybridge Heath.

ARE ROBINS EATABLE?

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—May I call attention to a remark of "E. K. R.'s" in the edition of COUNTRY LIFE for March 1st. Speaking of the well-known fact of the robin's fearlessness of, and intimacy with man, he mentions as a probable cause the supposition that the robin is not good to eat. Deterred by an unpleasant sulphurous smell, which "E. K. R." mentions as having himself noticed about dead robins, the primeval man, he conjectures, may have refrained from eating, and therefore from killing them, thereby cementing a friendship arising in the first place from the insect-eating birds' utility about the dwelling. Primeval man must in that case have possessed a niceness of taste which, while shared with "E. K. R." and our lark-eating nation in general, is certainly not participated in by our neighbours on the Continent. At the end of the eighteenth century, at least, attention was called to the quantity of robins that were killed for food in Alsace-Lorraine. One newspaper of the period mentions that the garrison of Metz, "which usually consists of 10,000 men, has been known principally to live on robins. They are caught by snares in woods by numbers of the peasantry and sold for one halfpenny a dozen. In point of flavour," it is added, "they are only to be exceeded by the nightingale, which is less abundant, but yet so numerous as to be sold for six sous a dozen. It is an absolute fact, however incredible it may appear, that toll has been paid in Lorraine daily for 1,600 dozen robins that have been sold in the markets." I believe, also, but of this cannot be at all certain, that robins are killed and served up to tables as a great delicacy in Italy to-day.



One peculiar point in the above-mentioned fact is the quantity of robins in Lorraine, where they were destroyed in such numbers, whereas in England, where, not only the robin himself but his nest and eggs also enjoy a moderate immunity from danger as far as man is concerned, they are comparatively rare birds, and have never increased to any considerable extent, as have sparrows and starlings, for instance. Perhaps "E. K. R.," whose delightful notes, permit me to say in passing, are one of the most enjoyable features of COUNTRY LIFE to the lover of natural history, may be able to throw some light on this fact.—A. H. B.